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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

46,709

Sale of the century that never was

The Gandhi papers

G2 with Europe 10/11

Return of Cam Mack and Martin Guerre

The comeback wizard

G2 with Europe 10/11

Society

Life on the edge — in Burkina Faso

G2 pages 10/11

Communication problems may have led to tragedy

350 die as jets collide

World's worst mid-air crash

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

INDIA'S government launched a full-scale judicial inquiry last night after a Saudi jumbo jet and a Kazakh airliner were destroyed in a mid-air collision, 50 miles south-west of New Delhi, killing all 351 passengers and crew aboard the two planes.

It was the worst mid-air crash in aviation history, and the third worst air disaster. As Saudi crash experts made their way to India, investigators were focusing on possible communication problems between the Kazakh pilot and Delhi air traffic control, or equipment failure.

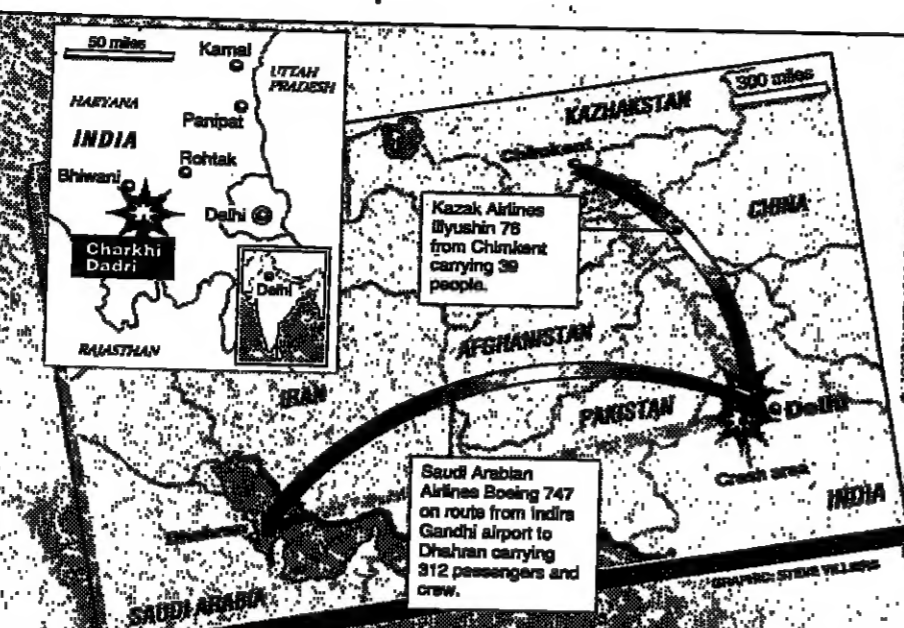
The collision between the Saudi Boeing-747, carrying 312 people, and the Kazakh Ilushin-76 charter flight with 39 aboard, occurred over flat farmlands in the northern state of Haryana. Although night had fallen, the skies were clear. One British man was reportedly aboard the jumbo.

The Saudi airliner had left New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport bound for Dhahran and Jeddah only seven minutes earlier, when it crashed into the other plane arriving from Chikankot in Kazakhstan.

Indian aviation experts said that pilots from the former Soviet Union have always had problems in understanding instructions given in English.

In recent years, pilots from the former Soviet republics have been flying to New Delhi in greater numbers — new airlines using old aircraft — as they compete for the lower end of the market.

Air traffic controllers said it was very rare for a Boeing, which is equipped with the latest navigational aids, to



Major air disasters

- March 27, 1977: Two Boeing 747s operated by Pan Am and KLM collided in flight off the coast of Tenerife, Canary Islands, killing 270.
- August 12, 1985: Japan Air Lines Boeing 747 crashes into mountains near Nagasaki, 289 killed.
- March 27, 1977: Turkish Airlines Boeing 747 crashes into the sea near Crete, 248 killed.
- June 25, 1988: An India Boeing 747 crashes off coast of Bangladesh, investigation concludes death toll of 257.
- August 19, 1985: Emergency landing of Saudi Arabian Airlines Boeing 747 at Riyadh airport, 301 killed.
- April 1, 1985: Two Air France Boeing 747s collide in USSR near Vladivostok, 288 killed.
- December 21, 1985: Two Air Boeing 747 crashes at Liphur, Scotland, 270 killed, including 11 on ground.
- November 1, 1985: Korean Airlines Boeing 747 crashes by Soviet fighter near Sakhalin Island, 229 killed.
- April 26, 1984: China Airlines Boeing 747 crashes in Nagasaki, Japan, 282 killed.



Saudi Arabian Airlines Boeing 747



Chief crash investigators in Delhi

make a mistake on take-off. H. S. Khola, the director of civil aviation, said air controllers had ordered the Saudi plane to climb to 14,000ft, and the Kazakh aircraft to descend to 15,000ft, when disaster struck. "At 18.33 the [Saudi] aircraft was airborne and about 18.40 the contact was lost, about seven minutes after take-off," he said.

The secretary-general of the Indian air traffic controllers' guild said the Kazakh aircraft could have been flying at a height lower than 15,000ft. "Russian aircraft normally have cockpit equipment marked in the metric system, and there could be a possibility of wrong data setting and

thus wrong height level being maintained," he said.

The crash, which left scattered flaming debris for six miles, was seen by several people, including the pilots of a United States air force plane carrying supplies to the US embassy in New Delhi.

"We noticed out of our right-hand a large cloud lit-up with an orange glow," one pilot said. The glow increased in intensity, and then they "saw two fireballs".

A building contractor, Rao Singh, said: "I saw a fireball and big black smoke, about three or four kilometers [two miles] from my house, falling into the fields. The sky was absolutely red."

The real rescue work will get under way after daybreak today, but the Indian air force has sent helicopters equipped with night sights to the area. Police have cordoned off the crash site and posted guards over the belongings of the dead, which were strewn among the wreckage.

About 270 bodies, many charred and still burning, have been recovered. The Press Trust of India reported that a few people had survived the impact but died before reaching hospital.

In New Delhi, terrified relatives descended on the airport, seeking information, forcing the delay of flights. Many of the passengers on

Whips 'tried to subvert Hamilton investigation'

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

THE Government was accused last night of an organised attempt to subvert the first investigation into the cash-for-questions scandal which examined former minister Neil Hamilton's undeclared stay at the Ritz Hotel, Paris, and cash payments from Mohamed Al Fayed, owner of Harrods.

But MPs investigating the affair yesterday were prevented from pursuing the allegation and went into secret session when a new document implicating a second government whip in the scandal was produced.

The document emerged during a two-hour cross-examination of David Willetts, the Paymaster General and former assistant whip, who wrote a memo suggesting Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, the Tory grandee chairing the original investigation, could smother its findings.

Dale Campbell-Savours, Labour MP for Workington, caused a furore last night by producing a letter from Andrew Mitchell, a government whip who sat on the first inquiry, to Richard Ryder, the Chief Whip.

Mr Campbell-Savours told Mr Willetts: "I put it to you that there was a deliberate, very effective effort made by the whips' office — and you were in the whips' office and Andrew Mitchell was in the whips' office — to try to influence this inquiry and to use the relationship between a member of that committee who was a whip and a clerk of the House of Commons to feed information to the Chief Whip and ultimately the Prime Minister."

Mr Willetts said: "I'm not prepared to speculate about a note which has just been put in front of me. I do not know



its provenance. I don't even know whether Andrew Mitchell wrote it or not."

Tony Newton, chairman of the Standards and Privileges Committee which is investigating the scandal, stopped further discussion of the new evidence saying it was not reasonable to question Mr Willetts on it.

He told Mr Campbell-Savours: "I'm simply suggesting, prompted by the obvious feeling of some members of the committee, that it would be inappropriate to continue to ask David Willetts questions about it."

Tory MPs, led by Iain Duncan Smith, Conservative MP for Chingford, protested after Mr Campbell-Savours produced the letter which he said was part of an "organised pattern" by the Government's whips' office — which imposes party discipline and gathers information — to keep John Major informed about the inquiry.

Mr Newton, Leader of the House, nearly closed the session but eventually won agreement for MPs to discuss turn to page 2, column 8

Letters, page 8

Priest led Internet paedophile ring

Six years jail for sex abuse of boys

Madeline Bunting Religious Affairs Editor

ROMAN Catholic priest who used the Internet to sell paedophiles around the world how he had abused boys was yesterday jailed for six years.

Father Adrian McLeish used his computer skills to build the biggest collection of child pornography discovered. The material, on four computers and including 9,000 images, would have filled the 24 volume Encyclopedia Britannica 11 times over. Detectives told Newcastle upon Tyne crown court that it included the worst material seized in this country.

Sentencing McLeish, Mr Justice Moses said: "You sexually abused four young boys, some of whom you groomed

abroad describing how he had assaulted four boys and identifying them by name. The case is the first in this country with a proven link between pornographic correspondence on the Internet and abuse of children.

The boys whom McLeish assaulted, now aged 18, 14, 10 and nine, went to the police after the priest's arrest. McLeish had made contact with the boys through their families' connection with the church and had groomed them for his sexual activities.

Beatrice Bolton, prosecuting, said the families "all had a liking and trust of McLeish and were happy to let their children stay the night with him — some the youngsters were safe in his hands".

Outside the court, solicitor Charles McCain, representing three of the families, said: "The children and their families have suffered unimaginable harm in the hands of Father McLeish."

Legal aid has been granted to pursue a claim for damages and Mr McCain said he hoped the church would deal with the civil claims "quickly and sympathetically to enable the



McLeish entering court: Huge collection of pornography

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The Willetts inquiry

Letter points to 'inquiry interference'

Labour MP says whips organised campaign to sway committee

Alan Travis and Owen Bowcott

FRESH evidence of an organised campaign by government whips to influence the Commons committee looking at the Guardian's original allegations against Neil Hamilton, the former Tory Minister, was disclosed by a Labour MP last night.

Dale Campbell-Savours, MP for Workington, revealed the new evidence — contained in a letter to the then Government Chief Whip, Richard Ryder — to the Standards and Privileges Committee investigating whether improper pressure had been used in 1994.

Mr Campbell-Savours repeatedly challenged David Willetts, Paymaster General, to comment on the activities of fellow government whips at the time disclosed by the correspondence.

"My argument is that the whips organised to ensure that matters being dealt with in the committee were dealt with in a particular way and the whips were not acting objectively in the handling of the Hamilton affair," said Mr Campbell-Savours.

"I am arguing that Mr Willetts in my view was one of these whips and he may have been aware of what was in this correspondence and I want to question him about it."

Mr Campbell-Savours said the letter to Richard Ryder was from Andrew Mitchell, MP for Gedling, a colleague of Mr Willetts in the whips' office at the time.

It was headed: "Chief Whip" and referred to an independent article of October 24 1994 about Mr Hamilton's failure to register payments from a PR company in the MPs' register of interests.

Mr Mitchell's letter said: "I spoke to the Registrar of Members' Interests. In confi-

dence [underlined] he told me the following:

a. He does not know what view the Committee [on MPs' Interests] would take. He does not think that they would like it. There is no relevant past decision (case law) for them to refer back to.

b. However, the Registrar was clear that he was entitled not to register it, especially if there was no related parliamentary activity. In normal times, he thinks the committee would have taken a relaxed view.

c. He summarised (having read the article in the Independent): 'I can understand his argument. It is not worthless.'

Mr Campbell-Savours said: "Then there is a comment of Andrew Mitchell's dated October 24 1994 to the Chief Whip saying: 'Not very helpful I am afraid.'"

"Mr Mitchell was a government whip at this stage and was a member on the Members' Interests Committee — a quasi-judicial committee. Do you Mr Willetts believe it is the kind of letter a whip should be sending to the Chief Whip when he is a member of that committee?"

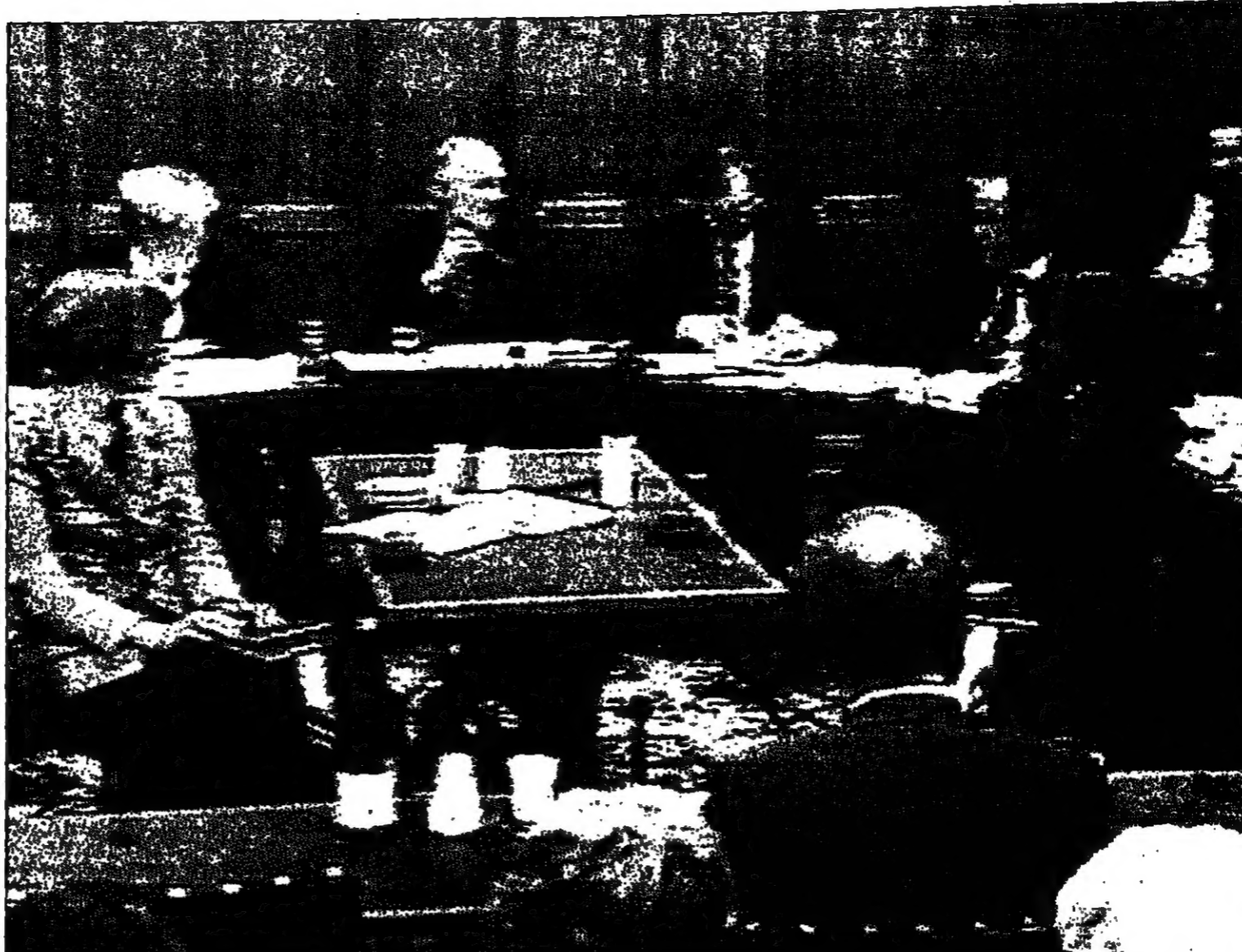
Mr Willetts said: "I am not prepared to speculate about a note that has just been put in front of me and other members of the committee have not seen it before either."

"I don't know its provenance or whether Andrew Mitchell wrote it or not."

He argued backing from Tony Newton, the committee chairman, who said it would have been appropriate to give Mr Willetts notice of the letter.

Mr Campbell-Savours said he was trying to establish "to what extent did Mr Willetts interfere with the workings of the committee. I am taking another example of interference and asking him whether it was right or wrong."

Again Mr Willetts blocked, saying he had not interfered with the workings of the com-



David Willetts (with back to camera) faces the Commons committee at which he was attacked by Labour MP Dale Campbell-Savours

mittee and could not speculate on other notes which had or had not been written by other people.

"Do you think it is right," persisted Mr Campbell-Savours, "that a government whip who was a member of a quasi-judicial committee of the Commons should or could use that committee membership, and the relationship that goes with it with the clerk of that committee, to ring up and extract information about another MP without a complaint being made?"

Again Mr Newton intervened before Mr Willetts could say anything and told Mr Campbell-Savours that it was not reasonable for him to

ask the Paymaster General such questions as he had no way of knowing the answers.

Mr Campbell-Savours claimed that at the time of the allegations against Neil Hamilton in 1994, the chief whip was carrying out detailed inquiries into the affair and reporting to Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister. The Commons was at "fever pitch" over it, he said.

"The flow of information was from the clerk of the Members' Interests Committee, to Andrew Mitchell, to the whips' office, to the chief whip and to the Prime Minister," Mr Campbell-Savours told Mr Willetts "and this is the background to the writing

of your memorandum."

The memo referred to by Mr Campbell-Savours appeared to indicate that Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, then chairman of the committee investigating MPs' behaviour, wanted advice from the Government on how to deal with complaints about Mr Hamilton. On Monday Mr Willetts denied such an interpretation.

At this point Mr Newton intervened by saying that it would be "inappropriate" to continue questioning Mr Willetts on the basis of Andrew Mitchell's note. There should be further discussions about it at another stage.

Mr Campbell-Savours said Mr Mitchell had led the discussion about Neil Hamilton on the Members' Interests Committee and most of the decisions that were taken.

"Within that committee there were whips who were trying directly and deliberately to interfere in the Hamilton inquiry," he added. Mr Willetts would have been well aware of what was going on.

"There's a pattern here of intense whip activity both on and off this committee."

Mr Willetts denied there had been any concerted campaign. "If there's a whips' note saying it will rain and it rains, then that's proof," he told Mr Campbell-Savours.

Mr Campbell-Savours said put it to Mr Willetts that the "embellishing" in his original memorandum might have been because he was ambitious or trying to attract attention to his new role as a whip. "You may have a point there," Mr Willetts conceded. Later he described it as being "rather poorly drafted".

Quentin Davies, Tory MP for Stamford and Spalding, then resumed the line of questioning he had developed on Monday. Mr Willetts, he said, had been using "weasel words".

It would be better to say that he had been "inventing" whole phrases in his account of the conversation with Sir Geoffrey Johnson-Smith.

"You were traducing Sir Geoffrey," Mr Davies said to Mr Willetts. "You were implying he was open to manipulation and influence. That was an appalling libel on Sir Geoffrey if you took what was written at face value."

Was it not more plausible that the note was an accurate reflection of the conversation and that Mr Willetts had been "prepared to pay the price of lying to this committee" in order to protect Sir Geoffrey?

"There's no truth in any suggestion that I have lied to this committee," Mr Willetts retorted.

In successive exchanges with Mr Davies, he denied he was protecting Sir Geoffrey.

Hamilton scandal spreads

continued from page 1
the letter in secret at the end of the hearing. Later he was seen seeking an urgent meeting with Alastair Goodlad, the Chief Whip.

The letter to Mr Ryder appears to show that Mr Mitchell had used his privileged position to find out from the Registrar of Members' Interests whether Mr Hamilton had logged his consultancy with Strategy Network International, a public relations company which had strong links with South Africa.

The registrar is reported as saying that he does not think the committee would like this though "in normal times" it would take "a relaxed view" of the Hamilton case. Mr Mitchell comments to the Chief Whip: "Not very helpful I am afraid."

Last night government whips admitted that the letter was genuine, leaving the committee with the problem of whether to call Mr Mitchell to give evidence.

The hearing came two years after the Guardian reported that Mr Hamilton and Tim Smith, another minister, had received cash from Mr Al Fayed for asking parliamentary questions.

The story led to the establishment of the inquiry under Lord Nolan to examine standards in public life, and a reluctant reform of parliamentary procedures.

Dale Campbell-Savours — awkward to the core



THE standard complaint that to many MPs are interested only in becoming ministers would never have applied to Dale Campbell-Savours (right), even if he had not been elected Labour MP for Workington at the start of Labour's long march through the Opposition lobbies in 1978.

From the start of his Commons career, he demonstrated that puritanical, inquiring independence which marks an MP down among the whips on both sides as unsuitable for office. Instead, he was destined to join the small but vital band known to colleagues as the Awkward Squad.

From low level RAF fights and the Falklands invasion of the early '80s, through spy rows and environmental battles, running fights over the committee on members' interests he was often in the fray, sometimes conspiratorial, always assiduous.

He even tracked down the window cleaner who stole his portable phone — by getting

BT to check all the numbers dialled. Any MP facing investigation by the new Standards and Privileges Committee must assume that the gangling Campbell-Savours will be the most tenacious inquisitor.

The child of well-to-do parents, educated at the Sorbonne, he was (first for Labour) a successful businessman as well as an active Christian. Some Tory MPs found him sanctimonious, but few doubted his sincerity.

He has suffered persistent back trouble, with pain and redness in his eyes. This has made him look older than his 53 years, but it has not dulled his zeal. He lives in Keswick, Cumbria, with his Icelandic wife, Gundrun.

Quentin Davies — loud libertarian who failed to win office



WHY did Quentin Davies (right), the Tory MP for super-safe Stamford and Spalding, suddenly come out as a serious backbench rebel in 1996, after nine years of decent, loyal obscurity, MPs were asking themselves again this week.

This time it was his tough cross-examination of David Willetts, the beleaguered postmaster general smothered in the cash-for-questions row. Last February he was one of only two Tory MPs to break ranks over the Scott report on arms sales to Iraq and declare in the tense Commons debate — which the government won — by one — that William Waldegrave had misled the House on changed export guidelines.

Mr Davies, aged 52, urged him to resign to restore ministerial accountability.

With his loud, confident voice and his loud, confident pinstripe shirts, he is, as he seems, a financially-sophisticated and successful merchant banker. Politically ambitious since his Cambridge days, he is widely seen as

rightwing, but one of the most consistently libertarian MPs, according to an Adam Smith Institute analysis of the 1997-98 session.

There was always an independent quirk in his make-up, typical of better-off and better educated Tories. An ardent pro-European, Mr Davies voted against the 1990 War Crimes Bill, supported Michael Heseltine's leadership claims, yet praised Norman Lamont's budgetary courage weeks before the then Chancellor was sacked in 1993.

Last night Tory colleagues were murmuring that his new membership of the Awkward Squad might reflect a familiar pattern: failure to win office when young whipper-snappers like Mr Willetts did.

Andrew Mitchell — junior whip who sparked walk-out



FLEET Street legend has it that the choleric pundit, Paul Johnson, once announced in El Vito's wine bar that "one of the waiters here is a Tory MP." Actually, Sir David Mitchell, MP for NW Hampshire, was not a waiter but a substantial shareholder in the family wine business.

He was also the father of Andrew Mitchell (right), MP for Gedling in Nottingham since 1997, and a junior social security minister. Mitchell Jr was mixed up in the drama over the Hamilton affair because, in 1994, he was the junior whip on the old select committee on members' interests, the first whip ever appointed to it.

It led to ructions and a Labour walk-out. But it did Mr Mitchell no harm. His father, now sitting on the new standards and privileges committee, has had a solidly respectable career since 1969, rising to minister of state in the '80s, serving on countless committees. "Right-wing and loyal" is the thumbnail description.

From the start young Andrew was destined to be something more, the beneficiary of Rugby School (known as "Thrasher" for his stern line), Sandhurst and Cambridge where he was president of the Union (1978) and the Conservative Association and a contemporary called him "the most overly-ambitious man I know."

He went on to work for Lazard's bank, while dabbling in politics as an activist in Labour's East London. He is pro-privatisation, pro-hungry and also backed the NHS — his wife is a doctor — but along the internal market model.

Still only 40, Mr Mitchell is smooth, polite in a sleek way, assiduous, and full of prospects.

Tony Newton — fairness and decency personified



AS CHAIRMAN of the standards and privileges committee, Tony Newton (right) yesterday stepped in to shield David Willetts from some tough questioning.

But his reputation for fairness, sincerity and decency — above all being a man "outside the party brigade" — means he would have done the same for a Labour MP. That reputation helped secure him the highly-prized chairmanship of a committee where impartiality is essential.

The Leader of the House is above all a safe pair of hands, a highly experienced parliamentarian who rose under Mrs Thatcher to become social security minister and is now well respected on both sides for his competence and pragmatism. The worst that can be said of him is that he is lacking in humour.

The man who once confessed to having always been a Conservative, although he didn't know why, first became active politically at Oxford, where he became president of the Oxford Uni-

versity Conservative Association. He spent 14 years in the Conservative Central Office research department — where he perfected his grasp of detail — and was awarded the OBE for his political services in 1972. He was adopted for the marginal seat of Braintree in Essex in the same year, and won it two years later.

Mr Newton has claimed he is not ambitious and is renowned for not being a social climber. To prove it, sent his two daughters to state schools. His kindness is reflected in a Westminster anecdote that he once took over from his official driver who had a phobia about motorways.

Profiles by Michael White and Rebecca Smithers

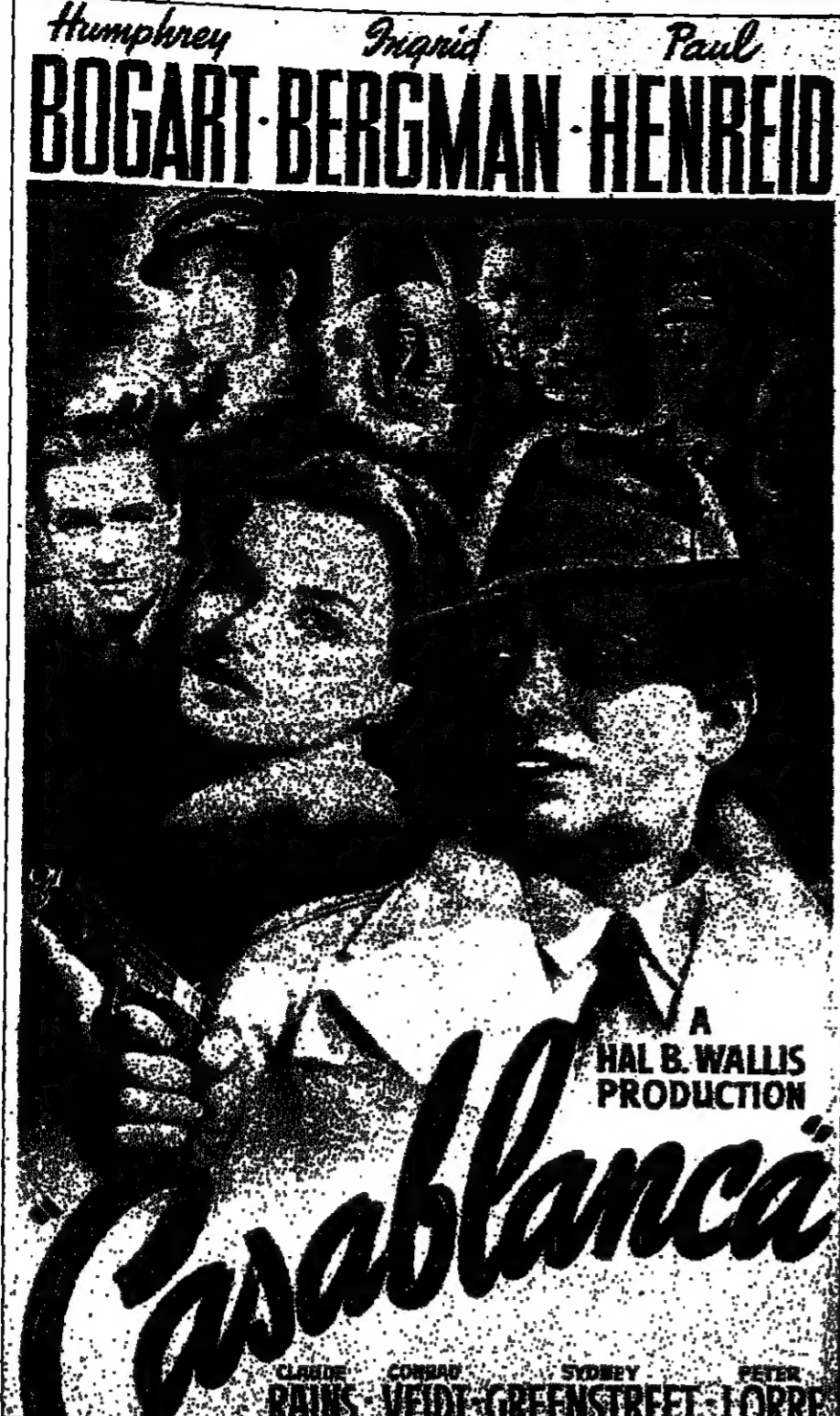
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طريق من الامم



Posters play it again for film art buffs

Don Gislister Arts Correspondent

REPORTS of a recovery in the art market may be exaggerated, but a poster for the 1942 film, Casablanca, sold at auction yesterday for £23,000, almost double the estimate price. The poster was part of the Stanley Caidin Collection, named after an American entrepreneur-lever. Over 12 years, starting in the mid-1970s, Mr Caidin amassed one of the biggest film poster collections in the world, featuring items from 1900 to the 1970s. Many of the posters in the sale at Christie's in London had never been at auction. A poster for the 1931 film of Frankenstein starring Boris Karloff sold for £14,500, while one for The Kid (right), made 10 years earlier and starring Charlie Chaplin, fetched £13,800. Posters for Hitchcock films were particularly popular, a design by Saul Bass for the 1958 film Vertigo, starring James Stewart and Kim Novak, selling for £1,380. A spokeswoman for the auctioneers said most of the buyers were private UK collectors. The buyer of the Casablanca poster bought it simply because he loved the film. It was not until after the first world war that billboard posters came into the world, using artists and original designs. Up to that time they had featured an image of a woman holding a card showing film titles and times.



Tories move to scupper EU 48-hour week law

Michael White, Larry Elliott and John Palmer

Key points

JOHN Major's ministers moved swiftly to "close a loophole" in the Treaty of Rome and prevent a predicted flood of backdoor social legislation after yesterday's European Court ruling enforcing the 48-hour working week. With mainstream Tories falling into line behind an electioneering campaign against what will be presented as creeping federalism, the Foreign Office tabled treaty amendments in Brussels while Mr Major sent a frosty letter to Jacques Santer, the European Commission president, and other leaders. From Strasbourg, Mr Santer gave him an instant brush-off, insisting that the Working Time Directive is flexible enough "not to place unnecessary burdens on business". Among other measures, the directive sets the maximum working week at 48 hours, unless unions and employers agree otherwise. At Westminster MPs of all camps were openly suspicious of the Government's declared intention to block all other EU reforms until it gets its way — and confused about the legal status of the disputed directive when it comes into force in Britain on November 23. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, told MPs there would be widespread consultation before legislation to bring Britain into line, if only temporarily. Tony Blair, the Labour leader, predicted that, as with the beef crisis, ministers would "seize on an issue, talk tough, alienate everybody, then cave in" — an "escape route" left until after the election. Mr Lang led claims — hotly denied by pro-Europeans — that yesterday's ruling is the "thin end of the wedge", opening a torrent of social engineering measures. They range from sex discrimination to worker consultation and statutory dismissal procedures — all denounced by ministers as burdensome bureaucracy. In sharp exchanges with the Labour leader in the Commons, the Prime Minister insisted "Britain wants good jobs, not worthless directives, not worthless directives". He would block the outcome of the Maastricht II review conference until his 14 EU partners gave way — just as he had threatened to block the original 1991 treaty until he got his social chapter set-out. As expected, the European Court of Justice upheld the 1983 directive, providing for holidays, maximum working hours and rest periods under health and safety legislation, which Whitehall says interprets the scope of the Treaty of Rome far more broadly than originally agreed by Britain. In Brussels, ministers and officials were openly scornful. They have already postponed the threatened decisions from next month's EU summit in Dublin to Amsterdam in June, when they hope to be dealing with a Labour government.

Police fear 'IRA raiders' escaped with explosives

Terror warning after break-in at London storage depot

Duncan Campbell, Crime Correspondent



A police composite image of one of the IRA suspects

ANTI-TERRORIST police are hunting three suspected IRA members who are feared to have escaped with bomb-making equipment and firearms after breaking into more than 50 storage units in London. The storage depot was opposite the workplace of IRA suspect Diarmuid O'Neill, who was shot dead during a police raid in September, a resident in the road, Richard Fitzpatrick, said. The three men — two of them wearing stocking masks — overpowered and handcuffed a security guard at the storage units in Shepherd's Bush Place, Hammermith, west London at 5.40pm last Friday. They disabled the closed circuit television and systematically went through 55 of the approximately 200 storage units before making their getaway. The guard managed to free himself from his handcuffs and called the police. He was treated for shock and bruising but was not hospitalised. Police last night warned the public to be vigilant in anticipation of further bombings. Commander John Grievie of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch, said: "There was sufficient evidence left at the scene for us to calculate that this was the IRA. We have strong grounds to believe that... possibly bomb-making equipment and firearms may have been removed from at least one of the storage units. We do not know where that material has been taken. We need that information from members of the public." The three raiders were described as white and were all wearing latex gloves. The one unmasked man was described as aged between 20 and 25, about five foot 11 inches tall and powerfully built. He was wearing a black woolly hat which hid his hair, and a black or very dark loose-fitting car-type coat. Mr Grievie said the suspects had systematically worked their way through the 55 storage units, and "knew precisely what they were looking for". Tests to indicate if there were traces of explosives were being carried out. The unit from which the material had been removed had been rented for a considerable time, he said. The audacious break-in would seem to indicate that the IRA is both anxious to step up the mainland bombing campaign and is short of the necessary materials. The raid is the latest move in the cat-and-mouse game between anti-terrorist officers and the IRA's active service units which has seen a series of arrests and seizures over the past three months. Mr Grievie repeated last month's warning from Scotland Yard that the public was in for some "dangerous months". He sought information from anyone who might have witnessed the three men escaping from the raid, or who had information about the suspicious sale of vehicles or the letting of premises. Asked why the men had to break into so many units to find what they were seeking, he said it was possible they had been given information by a fellow IRA member who knew the approximate location of the equipment but not the number of the actual unit. Last month, for the first time, Scotland Yard launched a poster campaign asking the public to contact police with information, and reminding them of a £1 million reward for information leading to the conviction of IRA members.

Blow to home buyers

Nationwide's mortgage rate rise strains-feelgood factor

Teresa Hunter

THE Nationwide Building Society yesterday announced it was raising mortgage rates, putting strain on the resurgent feelgood factor and sparking fears that borrowing costs are now entering an upward swing. Although other major lenders were waiting for the Chancellor's budget later this month before deciding whether to follow the Nationwide's lead, the move is gloomy news for the Government in the run-up to the general election. Any across-the-board increase is likely to hit the recovery in the housing market, which has played a key role in rekindling the feelgood factor. If Kenneth Clarke cuts taxes in his budget, the pressure will also be towards higher interest rates. The Nationwide, with one million customers, provides one in nine mortgages. Its increase was the first such move in nearly two years. Its mortgage rate will rise by 0.25 per cent to 6.74 per cent after last month's rise in the bank base lending rate. The rate, which comes into force on December 1, will still undercut the 6.98 per cent typically charged by societies which have become banks. The new rates will push the monthly cost of a typical £50,000 repayment mortgage up by £6.97, to £326.03. Other lenders, such as the Halifax and Abbey National, are waiting to see what impact the move will have on the housing market. A Halifax spokesman said: "We need to see how money markets respond to any tax cuts in the budget. It could be that base rates may rise again — and any new mortgage rate would need to be set in the light of that." The Halifax adopted a similar wait-and-see approach when base rates fell before the budget last year — announcing a rate cut immediately after. The fourth largest lender, the Nationwide is pledged to remaining a building society. In February, as a sign of this commitment, it cut its rate to 0.5 per cent below the rest of the market giants when it announced a £500 million loyalty package for members. However, its keener rates have made it more vulnerable to the impact of rising money market costs and reduced its scope to delay increases. Its chief executive, Brian Davis, admitted he would not have raised mortgage rates without a move from the Chancellor, but said the society also wanted to be fairer to savers. Six million investors with the Nationwide will now see their savings rates increase by between 0.1 per cent and 0.8 per cent, depending on the account. "We do not believe this will have any impact on the housing market, as interest rates will remain at very low levels historically," Mr Davis said. The Abbey National, Britain's second biggest mortgage lender, said it had no plans to move mortgage or savings rates at present, and the Woolwich took a similar line. However, the much smaller Birmingham Midshires last week announced it was raising its variable mortgage rate from 6.99 per cent to 7.24 per cent while cutting its savings rates for investors.

Carey warns of 'bitter harvest' from school expulsions

Madeline Bunting Religious Affairs Editor

THE Archbishop of Canterbury warned yesterday that expelling disruptive children from schools could lead to them taking revenge on society in future. Dr George Carey warned that young misdeeds in particular have a way of "biting back in spectacular fashion", and pleaded for a considered strategy and sufficient resources to reintegrate them. "If we fail to address with real urgency... the vast problem being stored up in the form of angry, disappointed young people who feel that mainstream society has no time or place for them, we shall reap a bitter harvest," Dr Carey told a Society of Local Authorities seminar in central London. He argued that a minority of disruptive children should not be allowed to wreck school communities, but cited a correlation between expulsions and a "subsequent career in delinquency and crime".

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Theatre can be a bitchy place. At the original first night of Martin Guerre, one actor asked another: "What do you think?" Back came the reply: "It's even worse than I'd hoped." Michael Billington

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4 BRITAIN

News in brief

BA must pay £3m to Iraq flight hostages

BRITISH AIRWAYS faces a bill of £3 million after losing a French appeal court case involving compensation for Gulf war hostages. Sixty-one French passengers were among 354 people on board a BA flight from London which landed at Kuwait airport on August 2, 1990 — four hours after Iraq invaded. Iraqi soldiers seized the Boeing 747 and passengers and crew were held hostage for up to three months. The French nationals won their compensation battle against BA in a French court last year, with the airline being ordered to pay about £3 million. Yesterday BA, which has always claimed it had no way of knowing the invasion was under way, lost its appeal, with the Paris court confirming the compensation for all but five of the hostages, for whom it made minor adjustments. The plaintiffs said BA had committed a "severe error" and demanded compensation for mental anguish. The airline said it found the decision "disappointing" and was considering a further appeal. BA has also denied that a group of SAS commandos was on board the flight.

New child abuse claims

A JOINT police and social services inquiry into the sexual activities of a choirmaster who killed himself the day after being charged with indecency involving a child under 16 has revealed six further allegations against him. It was disclosed yesterday. Suffolk police said in a statement that their investigation into allegations of child abuse against Christopher Barnett, aged 37, from Holton Road, Halesworth, Suffolk, founder and director of the Wenhamston boys' choir and associated with 18 other similar organisations, had been completed. The statement said 14 boys were interviewed by child protection officers, and six made allegations of indecency against Mr Barnett. All have been offered counselling. The new allegations are in addition to the offence Mr Barnett was charged with on September 4 and two other indecency allegations being investigated by police when he committed suicide by jumping from a bridge over the river Orwell at Ipswich the following day. — Alan Watkins

Asthma victim wins £2.4m

A MAN left totally dependent after suffering brain damage during an asthma attack was awarded £2.397 million compensation yesterday. The damages will be paid by the Medical Defence Union, which admitted liability on behalf of Graham Langdale, a retired GP. Dr Langdale, who had a practice in Boscombe, Dorset, was called out to Leslie Drake, a trainee electrician, in West Southborne, Bournemouth, in June 1986. Mr Drake was not admitted to hospital until the early hours of the next day when his condition deteriorated sharply. By then it was too late to prevent brain damage caused by oxygen starvation. Mr Drake, a 38-year-old former Royal Marine, needs 24-hour care at the Grafton Manor rehabilitation home in Northampton.

Woman barred from crew

A CAMBRIDGE university woman student has been prevented from rowing in a college men's first crew. Jenny Fox, aged 19, is 6ft and 11½ stone, but the Amateur Rowing Association has ruled that, apart from a few exceptions, racing crews may not be mixed. Ms Fox, a veterinary student at Robinson College, has been rowing for the women's first eight and was asked to step in when a crew member was injured. Rosemary Napp, national manager of the Amateur Rowing Association, said: "There is a clear division between men's and women's racing. The issue hasn't come up before because women just weren't up to the same level. But we're looking at changing our rules: there is a discussion that open racing — at the top level — should be mixed." — Clare Longrigg

Nursery campaign 'a fraud'

THE Government's £1.9 million advertising campaign to promote nursery vouchers, to be launched today, is untruthful, misleading and political, David Blunkett, Labour's education spokesman, has complained to the Advertising Standards Authority and the Independent Television Commission. More than £1 million has already been spent promoting vouchers in four pilot areas. After Labour complaints that Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, tried to involve civil servants in a political campaign, Mr Blunkett accused the Government of abusing public information advertising for party political purposes. Vouchers worth £1,100 would land on the doorsteps of families months before a general election, he said. — Donald McLeod

Granada in foreign deal

GRANADA Television yesterday became the first British production company to be commissioned to make dramas specifically for the US market. It is to produce a US version of Cracker for ABC, with a US actor in the lead role of criminal psychologist Fitz, played in Britain by Robbie Coltrane. Andrea Worfor, joint managing director of Granada Productions, said this was the first of a number of international deals. — Andrew Cull



The clean-up operation after the Sea Empress oil tanker spill in February

PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

Tanker disaster pilot cleared

Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

THE pilot of the Sea Empress oil tanker who was demoted after the disaster at Milford Haven, yesterday won the battle to clear his name. At the same time it emerged that rules governing super-tanker movements into the harbour have been changed to ban entry in the three hours before low water. The Sea Empress was brought in by pilot John Pearn 1½ hours before low tide, and hit the rocks. The inquiry into the disaster has yet to report, but the clearing of the pilot leaves open whether the rules of navigation decided by the Milford Haven port authority were correct. The "rule of thumb" applied before the accident was that if there was 10 per cent clearance of water below the keel of the tanker it could enter the harbour channel, said Peter Taylor, deputy harbourmaster, yesterday. Shadow shipping minister Glenda Jackson said she was concerned at the "rush to judgment" which led to Mr Pearn being charged with incompetence. "This [appeal] decision underlines a growing and disturbing trend of immediately seeking to pass the blame for accidents on to individuals rather than examine the underlying causes of the incident," she said. Mr Pearn's solicitor, Charles Hattersley, said after the appeal: "He is relieved that justice has been done and he can get on with his job. He is a proud, professional pilot and wants all this put behind him." Mr Pearn fought the decision of a port disciplinary committee which found him guilty of incompetence after a hearing in June. He was demoted and banned from guiding ships of more than 90,000 tonnes.

Mr Hattersley said: "Mr Pearn regrets the vessel going aground as much as anyone, but these accusations of incompetence were brought against him unfairly. We are now back to the position before he was charged, with no slur on his record." Mr Pearn's defence team argued that he had correctly calculated the ship's course, but unknown factors contributed to the vessel running aground. More than 72,000 tonnes of oil poured into the sea when the 147,000 tonne Sea Empress ran aground on rocks near Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, in February.

Budget to put £150 on council tax

Rebecca Smithers Political Correspondent

HOUSEHOLDS face an increase in their council tax of at least £150 under the Government's plans to finance tax cuts in the Budget. The Government has planned for a substantial above inflation rise in council tax, to offset the reduction in central government grant payable to local authorities. Ministers have given numerous strong hints over the past 12 months that they would like to see council tax pay a higher proportion of the cost of local services. In last year's Budget the Government disclosed that it expected total receipts from council tax to rise by £3.5 billion over three years — equal to 2p on the standard rate of income tax, and equivalent to just over 25p per Band D property, or some £3 extra per week. This typically represents an average family home in the £88,000-£98,000 price range, in the middle of the A-H band ranges. Government sources indicated yesterday that in the Budget in two weeks' time a new three-year plan will be given. In the third year, council tax is likely to be forced up even further by more than the

rate of inflation. The rises already pencilled in are because of a freeze in grant aid to town halls, where any increase in spending would have to be funded almost exclusively by council tax. Last year the settlement for local authorities was seen as extremely unsatisfactory, with councils expected to claw back the supposed increase in funding for education from resources already earmarked for other services. Yesterday the shadow environment secretary, Frank Dobson, said: "Whether Ken Clarke announces tax cuts in his Budget or not, he is certainly planning to force up council tax." Addressing the annual general meeting of the Association of County Councils in Eastbourne, Mr Dobson said: "The Tories may be giving with one hand. They will certainly be taking away with the other. They will force local people to pay more and get less." The chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, Sir Jeremy Beecham, warned that "cost sharing for short-term political advantage would be in no one's long term interest". This year council tax rose on average 6 per cent, with inflation 2.4 per cent, and the year before it rose 3.2 per cent with inflation of 3.3 per cent.

'Stalker' accuses lecturer of affairs

Sarah Bosoley

A WOMAN student accused of stalking her former lecturer, told the High Court yesterday she had made complaints about him "for the benefit of womankind". Eileen McLardy, aged 50, a mature student, alleged that Robert Fine, also 50, a sociology lecturer at Warwick university, had made a sexual proposition to her, although she refused to say what it was. She also accused him of having affairs with doctorate students. Dr Fine is seeking an injunction against Mrs McLardy to prevent her molesting or harassing him or coming within 30 yards of his house in Leamington Spa. He alleges that she has persistently stalked him for two years, and is claiming damages over 140 separate incidents. Mrs McLardy is counter-claiming that the lecturer harassed and assaulted her. Ashley Underwood, counsel for Dr Fine, suggested to Mrs McLardy that she had said the lecturer was having affairs with students to "wound or punish" him. "Would it be such a nice fellow," she replied. She agreed with Mr Underwood that she had complained about him on behalf of womankind.

Asked if that was rather a lot to take on, she said: "I don't mind, I am a woman. I am used to it." Judge Thompson QC asked her: "What had he done?" She replied: "Improper conduct. He had made a sexual proposition to me." The judge asked: "What was the proposition?" "It was a sexual proposition. I don't think it is necessary as it has no relevance to harassment," she said. Mrs McLardy's complaint against Dr Fine of sexual harassment was thrown out by the university authorities in August 1994. The case continues today.



Eileen McLardy: refused to describe 'proposition'

Farm worker denies murder



Stable girl Jessie Hurstone, who died under a hail of blows in a caravan last year

Obsession 'drove man to beat stable girl to death with hook'

Geoffrey Gibbs

A STABLE girl working for leading national hunt trainer Richard Frost was beaten to death with an iron hook by an obsessive male friend who could not bear to see her with another man, a court heard yesterday. Jessie Hurstone, aged 27, died under a hail of blows in October last year in the caravan she occupied at Mr Frost's Hawson Stables, near Buckfastleigh, in Devon. It was "a vicious and horrible attack", Exeter crown court was told. Mr Frost's son Jimmy, a jockey, said the man had threatened to kill Miss Hurstone if she had anybody else. Stephen Webber, aged 39, a farm worker, was said to have run around after the woman like a puppy. He denies murdering her. Opening the prosecution case, Roderick Denyer QC said Mr Webber had carried out the killing after walking "in the dead of night" across fields from his home half a mile away and breaking into Miss Hurstone's caravan as she lay in bed. He had picked up the iron hook, used for loading silage bales, that was hanging in a barn close to the caravan. After changing his blood-



Hawson Stables, in Devon, where Jessie Hurstone, aged 27, worked

stained clothes at home he went to a friend's house in Buckfastleigh to wash and later disposed of the iron bar in a farm slurry pit. Miss Hurstone had suffered 39 injuries to her head, arms and shoulders. The iron bar had penetrated her brain. After initially denying the attack, Mr Webber admitted the killing to police, the court heard. Mr Denyer disputed that it was "a spur of the moment thing". It had been set up in advance and coolly executed, he said. "There was only one purpose of taking

that iron bar to that caravan. It was to kill her. He didn't need it to get into the caravan. The idea Mr Webber took the iron bar to frighten Miss Hurstone is a nonsense." Mr Denyer said that although Mr Webber had been friendly with Miss Hurstone the only evidence of a sexual relationship was what Webber had said about an occasion in 1994. In the summer of the following year he had developed an obsession for her. On the night she died Miss Hurstone had been out in Buckfastleigh with Jim Pearce, whom she had become friendly with at the beginning of that month. She returned to the main house at the stables at around 11pm and asked Richard Frost to walk her to her caravan. Her body was discovered the following day. Mr Denyer claimed that Mr Webber found the idea of Miss Hurstone going out with another man very difficult to come to terms with and that he had told police he had followed her home after she had been to Mr Pearce's house one night earlier that week. "He was watching, keeping an eye on Jessie," Mr Denyer said to police that he told Miss Hurstone he had come to teach her a lesson and had hit her in temper. The trial continues today.

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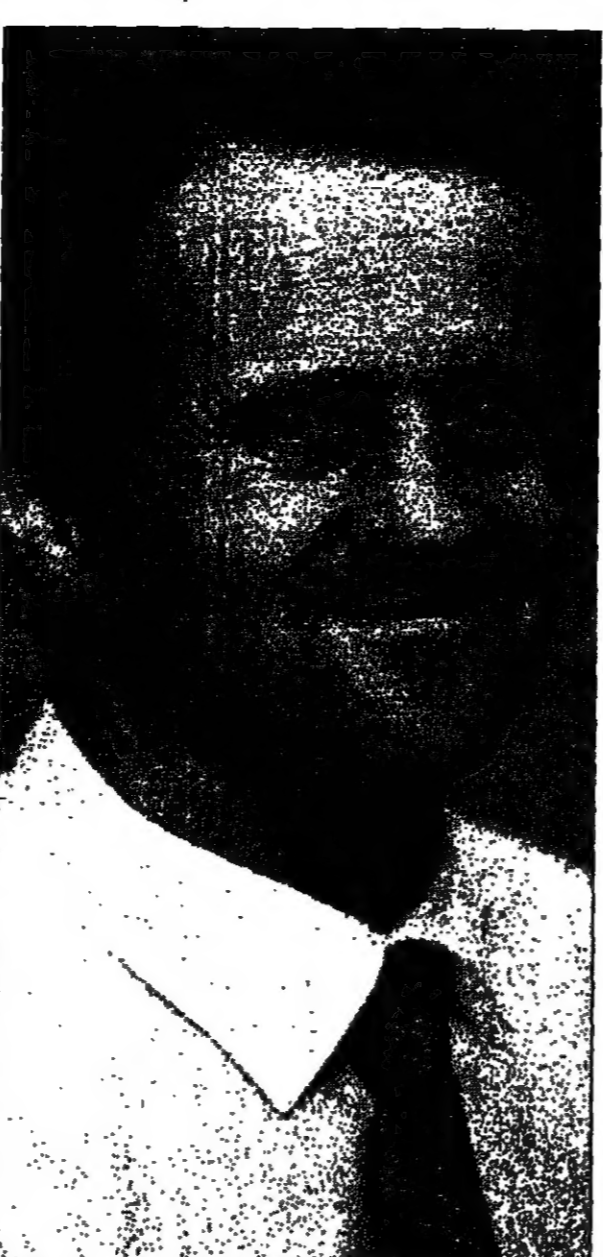
Government defeated in European Court

Four million get extra holiday rights

Seumas Milne Labour Editor

ALMOST 4 million people — just under 20 per cent of employees — will gain extra holiday rights as a result of yesterday's European Court judgment against the Government over the working time directive. More than 2 million will get paid leave for the first time. Rights to three weeks' paid holiday, rising to four weeks in 1999, is the strongest part of the directive — better known for its 48-hour working week limit, which is hedged with exemptions. Holiday entitlement will apply to everyone except transport and fishing workers and junior doctors. Britain is the only country in the European Union without legal holiday rights and 2.5 million — most of whom are part-timers and women — have no paid holiday. Just over 4 million have less than three weeks' leave and 6 million have less than four weeks. The vast majority of those will benefit from yesterday's judgment. Both Labour and the TUC yesterday highlighted the holiday element in response to the Government's onslaught on the directive. Brian Wilson, Labour's campaign spokesman, said it was "by far the most important aspect of the directive", adding that the Tories would be "the only party ever to go into a general election on the platform of taking away holidays from 2.5 million families". The Government faces a complicated legal and legislative tangle over its defeat in Luxembourg, with trade unions determined to press home their advantage and exploit the November 23 deadline by which the directive is supposed to have been implemented. The Trade and Industry Secretary, Ian Lang, promised that the Government would now begin consultations with employers about how to do that. Some European legal experts argue Britain risks losing its right to some of the "derogations" notably the restriction of the 48-hour limit to compulsory working — if it fails to meet the deadline. That is discounted by others, including the Engineering Employers' Federation, which yesterday called for the Government to agree a realistic timetable with the European Commission to "avoid the spectre of vexatious, politically motivated cases being brought". The CBI pleaded for "clear guidance" from Whitehall. Unions are planning to launch a spate of legal actions against the Government and public sector employers after November 23 over the failure to implement the directive, while holding out to employers the carrot of negotiated agreements over hours, rest breaks and shift arrangements allowed for in the directive. Mr Lang said that the overall cost to industry could be £1.7 to £2 billion — though those were "tentative and provisional figures" and the cost could be much less. Only £100 million of the cost was put down to the 48-hour limit, compared with £500 million for the holiday rights and £500 million for rest break and shift restrictions.

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The company: Filtronic Comtek Product: mobile phone components Location: Saltaire, Bradford Number of employees: 440 in six plants Turnover last year: £34 million

Martin Wainwright visits a hi-tech Yorkshire company to test reaction to the judgment



Working practices

% of full-time employees working 46+ hours across EU

Table showing % of full-time employees working 46+ hours across EU for various countries: UK (16.0), Greece (11.7), Ireland (11.1), Portugal (10.9), Italy (8.3), France (8.1), Spain (7.9), Denmark (6.1), Germany (5.5), Luxembourg (4.1), Belgium (3.1), Austria (2.1), Finland (2.1), Sweden (2.1), Netherlands (1.1)



Manager: 'Our competitors are in Europe and they will be subject to the same rules'

Geoff Fletcher, (above) company general manager, 36, married with a young family. "If it was less than 48 hours a week, the rule would present us with problems. We have some people who work 48 hours a week in the machine shop, four 12-hour shifts. We also have

people have had to work more than 49 hours a week. The European Court seems to have chosen a figure in the grey area between too little and too much.

"If for example, they had chosen 36 hours, that would have been taking regulation too far. These things come down to a contract between the employer and the employee. At the other end, no one should work ridiculous hours.

Employee: 'I have been in situations before where people definitely took advantage of you'

Peter Schofield (above), organiser stores, despatch and goods-in, 28, single. "It's a damn good thing. Here, they stick to 37-and-a-half-hour weeks and five weeks' holiday and it's excellent. But I have been in situations before where people definitely took advantage of you. I know of several companies where you get only two weeks' holiday a year and hours can be up to 52 a week. No one can expect people to work well with conditions like that.

native. You couldn't do overtime and you couldn't progress, because there were so many people chasing the same goal. Here, how you do is a reflection of the work you put in.

"But people do need holidays. One of our directors went to the US this year and he was quite glad to get home. They have two weeks' holiday. He took his wife and children but didn't see them that much.

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Why all the fuss if Thatcher agreed the terms for reform back in 1986?

What exactly is the Working Time Directive which triggered this showdown? It is part of what pro-Europeans call the social dimension of the EU. It gives workers minimum rights to holidays (including three weeks' paid annual leave, rising to four in 1999), rest breaks and maximum working hours — 48 hours a week, but only as averaged over a four-month period (or longer with union and government agreement).

Didn't Margaret Thatcher sign the 1986 Act? Yes, although Eurosceptics don't like admitting it. The pass was sold then, when she agreed to let reforms needed to create the 1992 European single market be agreed by QMV. Lady Thatcher now says she was deceived by the "conveyor belt of federalism". Mr Major argues that using the Health and Safety heading is legislation by the back door to undermine Britain's competitiveness and low non-wage costs. It could add £100 million to hotel and catering costs alone, the industry claims.

the EU's Council of Ministers as long ago as November 23 1993, just before Britain's social chapter opt-out kicked in. It so happens that then employment secretary David Hunt, a leading Europhile, did not vote against it. Having watered it down, he boasted the measure was now "lootless", abstained and announced that Britain would appeal against its legality as a health and safety matter. The commission would then have to have it reissued under article 100 — which Britain could veto — or pass it under the social chapter, from which the UK has opted out.

All this is electioneering really, isn't it? Up to a point. Whitehall and Brussels have strong arguments on their side, worker protection versus labour flexibility. Compromises could be found. But Mr Major wants to play the anti-European card in the election and to accuse Labour of selling out to Brussels.

Sounds fair enough. Why the fuss? John Major's government argues that such arrangements are best left to employers and workers to settle according to traditions in each country. Rules imposed from Brussels make Europe uncompetitive and increase unemployment, already 20 million EU-wide. That is why deregulated, super-flexible Britain, which has few remaining statutory workers' rights, insisted on its opt-out from the Maastricht Treaty's social chapter in 1992.

So why has the 48-hour week been imposed on us? That's the rub. Directive 93/104/EC was proposed under article 118A of the Treaty of Rome by qualified majority voting because hours, rest breaks and holidays are regarded by the EU majority as a Health and Safety matter. The TUC agrees. Overwork

costs £16 billion a year in accidents and ill health. Under the terms of the 1986 Single European Act such issues can thus be decided without unanimity.

Tony Blair's too cute for that? Indeed. Hence Gordon Brown's wary works to the CBI on social protection this week. Both sides exaggerate the issue's importance. It would make less difference than either claims.

Why is it in the news this week? The directive was adopted by

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Advertisement for Churchill car insurance. Text: "A woman who hits a man usually does so only in extreme circumstances, whereas men seem to need little or no excuse to start pummeling their spouses." Francis Wheen. Phone: 0800 200 300. Churchill logo.

Advertisement for Churchill car insurance. Text: "Churchill can insure your car for less." Phone: 0800 200 300. Churchill logo.

6 WORLD NEWS

International force for Zaire

US stalls action to help refugees

Martin Walker in Washington

THE United States, distracted by cabinet reshuffles and its attempt to unseat the United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was being dragged slowly and unwillingly yesterday into giving token logistical support to a Canadian-led international force for the refugee disaster in Zaire.

American foot-dragging threatened to prevent swift and serious action, as it did two years ago. US officials were stalling on the grounds that there was no clear military goal: was the force intended to safeguard humanitarian convoys, push refugees back into Rwanda or send them back into their old camps in Zaire?

Canada's agreement to lead a multi-national force, and the reluctant acceptance by the Rwandan government of a modest French component, has made some kind of intervention likely.

But the basics of the operation — such as the number of troops, the kind of mandate

needed, and how to finance it — are uncertain, victims of the confusion which surrounds all such UN ventures while America remains so deeply ambivalent about them.

There is no coherent plan, rather four or five proposals running together, the state department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

The US said the refugees should be encouraged to return to Rwanda rather than be herded back to the over-crowded camps in Zaire.

Mr Burns was careful not to rule out some American involvement in tackling "this terrible humanitarian tragedy".

Canada was taking the lead in planning the intervention yesterday, consulting Britain, France, the US and other interested powers.

But no meeting was scheduled at the UN in New York, where Mr Boutros-Ghali was hoping that a successful inter-

national effort could strengthen his case for staying in office for a second term, despite US threats of a veto to exclude him.

Canadian officials hoped that a "firm decision to proceed" could be reached this week. They have offered a specially-trained force of 1,200 lightly armed troops with its own logistic, medical and communications facilities as the keystone of the effort.

Earlier offers from France and Spain to provide troops were stalled by Rwanda's initial refusal to accept French forces, seen as partial to Zaire.

Zairean rebels remain categorically opposed to any French involvement.

UN rules require the interventions' formal approval of the governments of Rwanda and Zaire. The Zairean authority in the eastern region has broken down.

Britain, which was discussing the intervention with Canada yesterday, says it will contribute, but no decision has been taken whether this will comprise troops, logistic support, or emergency finances.

The South African president, Nelson Mandela, supports sending troops in principle, but as with the Malian and Ethiopian offers of troops, this appears to be contingent on the UN raising the funds to finance the mission.

Ironically, the Zaire crisis seems tailor-made for the proposals floated last month by the US secretary of state, Warren Christopher, for an "African Crisis Response Force" with troops from African countries and financial assistance from richer countries, including the US.

But it may have come too soon for such an effort, which provoked criticism from the Republican-run Congress as a dangerously open-ended financial commitment which might draw the US into other unwise interventions, like that in Somalia.

The US, increasingly unpopular at the UN, was voted off an important budgetary committee last week.

Senator Jesse Helms, just re-elected to resume his chairmanship of the foreign relations committee, described it as "an outrage against the country which foots the bill".

It could escalate the row between America and the UN, further delaying any effort for Zaire.



Families in Goma, Zaire, beg for food at the gates of the UNHCR warehouse yesterday, held back by a security guard

Cholera 'could wipe out 250,000 refugees'

120 miles west of rebel-held Bukavu, east Zaire.

"Cholera broke out at Mwenga on Saturday night, but there is also dysentery and malnutrition. This, put together with the conditions of the 250,000 people, is like putting fuel on fire," Dr Bonifazio said in Kigali.

"The human loss will be impossible to calculate, it is a bomb, a very big bomb, and the people will die like flies unless help reaches them soon."

He said the 250,000

people at Mwenga were being held hostage by the former Rwandan Hutu militia and troops of Rwanda's ousted Hutu army and the Zairean army.

His information is based on radio reports reaching his expatriate colleagues who are still working at Bukavu hospital.

Cholera killed at least 30,000 refugees within weeks of more than one million Hutus fleeing from Rwanda into eastern Zaire in 1994, after the genocide

by Hutu extremists of up to a million Tutsis and others.

Aid workers say thousands of refugees have already died in eastern Zaire and even if a UN force brought aid today, many more would be too sick to save.

The aid agency Médecins Sans Frontières estimated that 1,000 were dying every day. — Reuter.

A fourth Spanish missionary has been presumed murdered in the Bukavu area of Zaire, where they

were aiding refugees fleeing fighting in eastern Africa, the Spanish foreign ministry said.

Although the body of the fourth missionary had not been found he was believed to be dead, said Adolfo Varas García of the Marxist order in Madrid.

Following the announcement, the foreign ministry asked the 39 Spanish missionaries working in the North Kivu and South Kivu areas of Zaire to return to Spain.

The resolution also expressed Cuba's concern that further measures had been taken against it despite the UN General Assembly's position since 1992, when the resolution was first proposed.

President Bill Clinton signed the Helms-Burton bill into law to woo the Cuban vote in Florida, but suspended for six months a provision which allows legal action against foreigners.

Mr Clinton had hoped to mollify his allies by signalling that he would be willing to extend the waiver when it comes up for renewal in January. But those hopes now look misplaced.

Arabs to shun Israel at economic summit

The soured Middle East peace process is looming over the Cairo forum, writes David Hirst

THE third Middle East and North Africa Economic Conference, Mena III, opened in Cairo yesterday in a climate of outright hostility — for the *Muhawwajin* are on the run.

The *Muhawwajin* — those who "rust" or "scurry" — are now a very common Arab political discourse. The Syrian poet Nizar Kabbani coined the phrase after the Oslo Accord and the historic handshake on the White House lawn between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat: "We have queued up like sheep for the slaughter, we have rushed and panted to lick the assassins' boots..."

The rush to "normalise" with a triumphant Israel is now derided by those who see it as a mark of Arab weakness.

Business is at the heart of normalisation, a fact demonstrated by these annual economic jamborees. The original aim was to create a regional economic order of which Israel would be an integral part — economic co-operation would consolidate Middle East peace.

At summits in Casablanca in 1984 and Amman in 1985, Israel led the way in fostering Shimon Peres's vision of a new Middle East, in which pan-Arab institutions would give way to larger ones incor-

porating the Jewish state. It proposed \$27 billion (about £17 billion) of grandiose schemes.

King Hussein of Jordan told his people that increasing normalisation would increase prosperity. Mr Arafat said that given the right economic climate he would turn Palestine into a "new Singapore".

The "scurriers" argued that Arab conciliation would encourage Israel to complete the peace process on the Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese fronts. Arab countries not directly involved in the conflict also rushed to normalise: Morocco, Tunisia and Qatar opened liaison bureaux in Israel. Qatar even agreed to supply it with natural gas.

The scurriers' critics said

'Why should we take part when Israel is preparing for war?'

the Arabs should withhold the economic rewards of normalisation as their last remaining means of pressure. Pro-American Saudi Arabia, whose immense wealth makes it the ultimate prize of Israel's economic penetration, refused lift the boycott of Israel until a comprehensive peace was achieved.

The turning point came with the rise of Benjamin Netanyahu. He is now held up as the embodiment of just how wrong the scurriers were.

"People are asking a simple and logical question," said the deputy editor of Cairo's

al-Ahram. "Why should we take part in an international economic gathering supposedly designed to underpin regional peace and security with economic co-operation when Israel rejects peace and is preparing for war?"

For a while it looked as if Mena III would not convene at all. President Hosni Mubarak threatened to cancel the summit if Israel continued to renege on its peace commitments. He only relented under intense US pressure, and because Egypt, anxious to advertise its privatisation drive, has more to gain from it than Israel.

The scurriers are now backtracking. Jordan has only sent a medium-level delegation. King Hussein is less ready to stick his neck out now than almost every political party in his kingdom has called for "an end to all forms of normalisation with the Zionist enemy".

Mr Arafat has reluctantly agreed to send a delegation to Cairo, but the West Bank businessmen's association is boycotting the conference, saying that Palestine "got nothing" out of Casablanca and Amman because of Israeli restrictions.

Qatar has postponed the opening of a liaison office in Tel Aviv and frozen its natural gas deal. Other governments have reportedly told their delegations to make no deals with the Israelis.

The Egyptian hosts make no secret of it since Israel is going back on the peace process, the Arabs should go back on the basic objectives of Mena I and II, and turn Mena III into a forum for inter-Arab business alone.

US army widens sex inquiry to other bases

Martin Walker in Washington

THE United States army, examining claims of sexual harassment of young female recruits at the Aberdeen training centre, has extended the investigation to at least three other military bases after receiving more than 2,000 calls on a special telephone complaints hotline.

So far, 246 calls have been referred to the army's criminal investigation department. Fifty-six concerned the Aberdeen centre in Maryland.

The army has charged two of Aberdeen's drill sergeants and a captain with coercing sex from young recruits eight weeks into their basic training. Two other sergeants face lesser charges of making "unwanted advances", and 15 instructors have been suspended from duty pending investigations.

The army has promised "zero tolerance" of sexual offences and senior ranks who do not help to stamp out harassment.

"We assume that it could be happening somewhere else, and that is why the army is casting its net very wide across the army," the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff at the Pentagon, General John Shalikashvili, said yesterday.

The new training centres being investigated are at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, Fort Knox in Kentucky, and Fort Jackson in South Carolina.

The army has sent questionnaires to more than 1,000 women who went through Aberdeen in the past 18 months to see if they were harassed.

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Free-market food summit condemned

John Hooper in Rome

THE World Food Summit opens here today to a chorus of protest from charities who argue it will merely serve to endorse a set of free-market principles favouring the richer countries.

The final declaration, agreed in advance, commits the international community to strive for food security "through a fair and market-oriented world trade system". In pre-summit statements, several charities argued that a market-led system could not be a just one.

Save the Children denounced the summit as a "forum for legitimising a new international code of practice which basically subordinates basic rights to the market philosophy".

Actionaid claimed that free trade was among the "main causes of food insecurity".

Oxfam said: "Enhanced competition between the surplus agricultural systems of the industrialised world and the deficit systems of the developing world will exacerbate problems of food dependency and destroy the livelihoods of vulnerable communities."

The nub of the charities' argument is that trade cannot be fair while the rich countries subsidise their farmers and allow the trading of grain to remain in the hands of half a dozen transnational companies.

The World Development Movement said yesterday that the biggest, Cargill, had an income equivalent to that of the nine largest sub-Saharan African countries.

The charities argue that the removal of tariff barriers can only undermine Third World food production and force it

to become dependent on imports, particularly of United States grain.

Oxfam's research paper quotes Hubert Humphrey telling a congressional commission in 1957: "If you are looking for a way to get people to lean on you and be dependent on you, in terms of their co-operation with you, it seems to me that food dependence would be terrific."

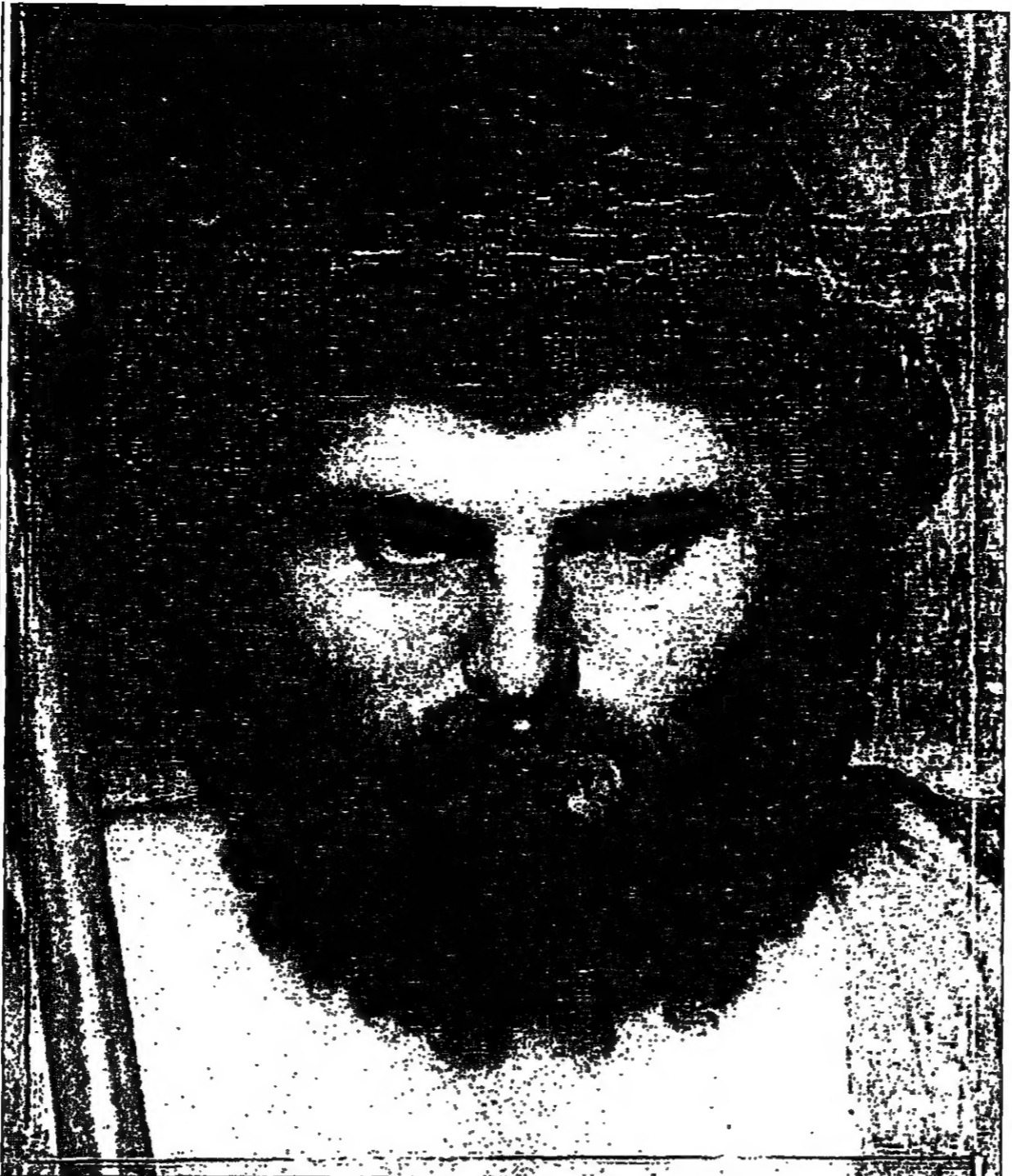
Save the Children was concerned that global cereal stocks were being kept at their lowest levels for years in the search for more market-sensitive pricing.

At the Istanbul, Beijing and Cairo UN conferences, which dealt with cities, women and population, there were divisions between governments and between the non-governmental organisations (NGOs). This time, with the governments of the First and Third Worlds having already agreed on the declaration, the stage is set for a straight clash between officialdom and the NGOs.

Charitable organisations say that a unique opportunity has been lost to extract commitments to the eradication of hunger. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Rome-based UN agency which is staging the summit, more than 800 million people in the developing world are suffering from undernutrition.

The conference aims to halve the number by 2010. And it is not seeking any pledges of assistance from the First World.

Christian Aid said yesterday: "There will be little to show for the Rome meetings unless governments are pushed to follow it up. The agreed actions are purely voluntary and there will be no new money on the table — the real measure of commitment."



Museums, stung by claims that they have dragged their feet in tracing the owners of 2,000 paintings stolen by the Nazis from private collections which together are worth millions of pounds, are trying a hi-tech tactic to silence the critics. **Paul Webster in Paris reports**

Two works by Ingres - Tête de Jupiter (above) and Portrait de père Desmarests (right) - are among the unclaimed works looted mainly from Jewish families during the second world war which are now being shown on the Internet

France turns to Internet to display looted artworks

FRENCH museums are creating a pictorial catalogue on the Internet of 2,000 paintings and other works of art, together worth millions of pounds, in an effort to trace the owners of unclaimed masterpieces recovered from Germany after the second world war.

In a further attempt to silence critics who claim that the French government has not tried hard enough to find the owners of looted artwork, an inter-

national meeting of government representatives and museum officials was held at the Louvre in Paris this weekend.

The 2,058 unclaimed works, including Impressionist paintings, notably 12 by the English artist Alfred Sisley, and pictures by Ingres, Boucher and Chardin, were among 60,000 pieces looted from private French collections which were discovered in Germany.

Most belonged to Jewish

families who were isolated by the Vichy regime's Jewish Statute in 1940 and later sent to Germany where they died in concentration camps.

About 76,000 Jews of French and foreign origin were deported. Bids on their homes by the Einsatzstab Rosenberg, a command of art experts working for Herman Goering, amassed thousands of works of art.

French state-run galleries which exhibit or stock

unclaimed paintings have been criticised since revelations that many countries have been reluctant to release looted Jewish assets.

But the director of the Musée de France, François Cachin, said: "Contrary to a commonly held view, state-run galleries have nothing to hide and have never spared efforts to give back works to their rightful owners."

She said the French paintings had been exhib-

ited twice in the 1950s and were regularly checked against an inventory of plundered works.

By 1948, 45,000 looted objects had been returned and thousands more sold, she said.

Since the reunification of Germany, a further 25 important artworks have been recovered, seven of which have been returned to their owners.

Only a tiny portion of the 1.6 million Swiss francs (£270,000) found in 11

recently investigated dormant Swiss bank accounts belonged to Jewish victims of the Holocaust, the country's banking ombudsman said yesterday.

"It was around 11,000 Swiss francs (£3,800)," Hanspeter Haeni said. Five of the account holders appeared to be Jewish. In the other six cases it was either unclear whether the owner was Jewish or clear that the accounts became dormant before or long after the Holocaust.

Spanish miners strike over plans to end subsidies

Adela Gooch in Madrid

MINING communities in the northern Spanish province of León began a general strike yesterday, marching through the streets in angry protest at government plans to phase out subsidies to the coal industry.

The protests, which began with a one-minute blackout on Monday night, were led by 8,000 pit workers. They herald further strikes in other mining areas — notably Asturias, on the northern coast.

Many pits in León, where shops and schools closed for the two-day strike, are in private hands but will be badly affected by the government's proposals to, in effect, kill off the unprofitable industry.

Some factory workers also joined the protest, which has the backing of many town

councils in the region. The lights on León's cathedral were dimmed and its bells tolled 90 times.

The miners want the government to reverse its plan to lift subsidies on Spanish coal and let power companies choose where they obtain supplies.

But their days are numbered. Spanish coal is of low quality, as well as costing 25 times as much as South African coal, and 20 times as much as United States coal.

The conservative government, planning to sell off state-owned power companies as part of an effort to open up heavily protected industries, says the measures are needed to meet the Maastricht criteria for monetary union.

But a vigorous response from the unions forced the industry minister, Josep Figue, to soften his initial plan.

£3bn 'missing' from EU coffers

Stephen Bates in Strasbourg

MORE THAN £3 billion of European Union funds is missing, according to the latest annual audit. The money, mainly destined for approved projects in member states, appears to have been mispent.

Auditors calculated that funds would have been lost to agricultural fraud and corruption in areas traditionally under suspicion, such as South European olive oil production, but also the misapplication of funds by member states and their failure to collect customs dues.

They estimated that 80 per cent of the money that went astray was the responsibility of the member states and 20 per cent was down to Brussels.

The commission promised yesterday in the wake of the report to enforce stricter controls on how EU finance is spent on roads and structural projects.

Ericki Lilkamen, the Finnish commissioner responsible for budget accounting, said: "It is not pleasant to listen to errors and mistakes in financial management. People usually say that errors occur in other countries but there is no scientific basis for that. It happens across the board."

He said the commission would take up the matter at the heads of government summit in Dublin next month, putting forward proposals for tighter accountability rules for

the disbursement of structural funds. This would mean that EU money given to projects which were not eligible could be reclaimed.

The Court of Auditors, the independent accountability body in Luxembourg which carried out the audit, reached the £3 billion figure — 0.9 per cent of the EU's £54 billion annual budget — by extrapolating from a series of spot-checks on expenditure.

A commission report earlier this year estimated that about £20 million — 0.9 per cent of the annual budget — was mispent, two-thirds of it by member states. The commission claimed yesterday that much of the money estimated as missing would be accounted for if member states had committed errors in distributing EU finances.

The auditors' report points to long-standing problems in the common agriculture fund such as double accounting of olive oil, caused by the failure of Southern member states to institute proper recording procedures.

It estimates that millions of pounds were lost by the failure of governments to collect customs dues or to track down frauds in agricultural export refunds.

The problem is such that 10 per cent of the £20 million allocated to fight fraud cannot be accounted for. The report suggests that that may be because not all the paperwork was available.

The EU budget is 1.2 per cent of the gross national products of member states.

Plan to limit TV imports fails to pass parliament

ATTEMPTS led by British Labour MEPs to ensure that more than half the programmes shown on European television are made in the European Union failed to win a sufficient majority in the European Parliament yesterday, writes Stephen Bates in Strasbourg.

The proposal that at least 51 per cent of programmes and videos should originate in Europe was aimed at safeguarding jobs in the industry and warding off the flood of

United States imports. The plan, opposed by most EU governments, was supported by 291 to 170 votes in Strasbourg, but fell 23 votes of an absolute majority.

Parliament adopted proposals to ensure that major sports events continue to be available aired on free television channels, and that talks should start on installing so-called v-chips in all new television sets to enable parents to vet their children's viewing.

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Bashing Brussels again

But wait: wouldn't less hours mean more jobs?

THE GOVERNMENT'S fierce resistance to the European Court of Justice's ruling on a 48-hour maximum working week owes much more to appeasing its Eurosceptic wing and positioning itself against the Labour Party than it does to the underlying merits of the case.

didn't publish it). He argued that there was plenty of medical evidence to show that a 48-hour week was bad for health. In these circumstances, a judgment laying down limits to compulsory working will be a constraint on exploitative employers while allowing long hours to be worked on a jointly agreed basis.

Europe's fraud mountain

Don't bash Brussels this time either: it's not their fault

THE European Commission's publication exploding popular myths about Europe is available in only one language - English. Yesterday provided a useful illumination of why it is needed.

ought to focus, not on the lazily familiar target of "Brussels". For all that, this is the second year running in which the auditors have refused to certify the legality of what is going on. Six per cent of all payments in the EU may be affected - more than £3 billion out of a total of £55bn. These are disgraceful failings. They would not be legal in a commercial company and they should not be tolerated here either.

Disaster in the crowded skies

The Delhi tragedy has lessons for the rest of the world

MID-AIR COLLISIONS are still so rare that yesterday's disaster near Delhi may be regarded as an appalling tragedy but a wholly exceptional one. At least that is what the statistics show.

accident occurred in the particularly hectic period of the early evening. The fact that a small, ex-Soviet airline was involved may or may not be relevant. The usual concerns about air traffic control will be raised. A combination of factors may, by ill chance, have been responsible. But every accident has to be looked at afresh.

Leading the World!!



Letters to the Editor

Mr Redwood, in need of respect

JOHN Redwood's article in our schools, November 12, seems to have been written by some bumbling Colonel Blimp from another age, full of bland mouthings based on a failure to understand the sort of lives people actually live - or indeed the effects of his own government's policies.

COULD not agree more with John Redwood's assertion that "authority needs to prove it deserves respect". It is, therefore, such a shame that he is a supporter of a government which, by its craven disregard for honesty and its lack of fair-mindedness in its dealings with substantial elements of society, has long since forfeited any right to respect.

JOHN Redwood has left me almost speechless with rage. How dare he write an article for a newspaper, let alone the Guardian, which is so patronising and offers such trite, hackneyed and offensive views? I quote: "I am the first to agree that parents should not beat their children senseless".

The generation game

MARTIN Jacques (Decline and Fallacy, Essay, November 9) suggests that the sixties were not really a better moral time. But while many of us were active in Anti-Apartheid and supporters of homosexual-law reform, and believed a Labour government would improve life in Britain by increasing equality, Martin was an unrepentant old Stalinist in the Communist Party.

MARTIN Jacques compares the "largely strangled existence" of his parents with the world of multi-media, overlapping circles "we live in" today. But the "we" he refers to is that of upwardly mobile metropolitans, free-wheeling their way from television studio to think-tank office convinced that their way of life is the norm.

A working week is a long time in politics

THE imposition of the 48-hour maximum working week (Major defiant on 48-hour week, November 12) will highlight the fact that, in many occupations - because of different attitudes towards travel, tea breaks, working lunches, preparation periods, etc - there is no consensus as to what actually counts as "work".

morality is the way in which the agenda has been set by members of the political class whose life-styles are so remote from those of the mass of the population, many of whom continue to lead atomised existences.

MARTIN Jacques downplays the greed and selfishness embodied in economic policy-making. He speaks for the influential part of society in a relatively secure position as to income and earnings. The company managers who shed labour are comfortable, as are the professional workers and bureaucrats, who do not fear unemployment very deeply.

well served by rigid employment rules (Get real about job creation in Europe, November 12). I have gone further to point out that the arguments over the single currency are inextricably linked with this issue and with any attempt to harmonise a European social model. If one examines the rest of Europe, rigid employment rules have had one significant effect - a massive increase in the number of unemployed.

WHAT a pity that Martin Jacques is so ill-informed on the churches' thinking about social issues. Thinking Christians nowadays read, for example, Gustavo Gutierrez's liberation theology, or Ken Leech's The Eye Of The Storm, or Rosemary Ruether's critique of male fallacies and power games. Here in Oxford, churchwomen and men are at the heart of Asylum Welcome's work on behalf of ex-Campfield detainees and local caring agencies. Rather than decrying what has been repressive in church attitudes, it is time for socialist secularists to recognise their Christian allies.

MARTIN Jacques is correct to point out that the majority is far more aware of prejudice and injustice than 20 years ago. The anachronism is that the Government has cloaked itself in myth and nostalgia, rather than confronting the moral maze it should be trying to solve. Most children are more aware of the rights and needs of the individual than any cabinet minister.

THE WRINKLE: "Winter's returning song" awakes this year as a stillness; a quiet sunrise on silver-grey frosts which fix the landscape in a moonlit glow. The day is bright and blue, still and strangely quiet. Evening falls early with cold glamorous tresses - the lingering sunset colours of that flaming ocean of the west begin to bleed from the sky and into the woodlands. The saffron glow of larches, and the inky blue-green oaks and pines, have for a brief, dying moment. All around are pools of shire countryside, and streams of mist and, like the mists, the sounds of the landscape are separated by a cool, still space. Without a breath of wind, the plume of steam from the sugar-beet factory stands erect, where the sweet soils of the lowlands are turned to sugar. The last flash of light marks from a meander in the Severn and a small pool against a dark wood. Just as darkness grips, all the pheasants begin their clockwork alarm together. The birds make a final communal salute to the light, which spreads from the west until it fades like the sound of a high-speed train into the east. Then the owls start. The first voice has lost all trace of summer's softness now and has a harsher, rasping screech: the sound of cold blood from the west and into the dusk. Other owls answer from the dark, impenetrable boundaries of their woods. Suddenly, the ghostly forms of antlered bodies flicker, their sharp hooves crackling through the static of crisp leaves into the deepest night of trees. One star above the branches, north and darkness.

Mr Willetts, in want of honesty

ONCE again we are faced with the ridiculous sight of politicians in a hole turning to linguistic sophistry as a way out (Minister accused of lying, November 12). We've had Alan Clark - who was "economical with the truth" - then Michael Howard, with his "operational matter". Now we have David Willetts, who would have us believe that "he wants advice" really means "he is in want of advice", and who regrets that he is "structured" an "unstructured conversation".

NEITHER David Willetts is lying to protect his salary and his reputation, or he really does sometimes use "wants" in the old-fashioned sense of "needs". I suggest a search through recent speeches in Hansard, to find out how often he has said things like "what criminals want is firm punishment" and "the committee wants sound advice" (in cases where it had clearly not asked for it). A few cases of "what the health service is in want of..." would be helpful. If we find a reasonable number, fair enough; if we don't... Philip Thonemann, 16 Shakespeare Road, London NW7 4BB.

FEEL sure thousands will wish to join me in congratulating Sir Geoffrey Johnson-Smith for booking his place in the Lords. I always thought he was awfully good on Amicus and I've been a fan of his grammar on BBC some years ago. And his hair was always immaculate. George Willoughby-Houghton, 106 Queensgate, London SW7.

A Country Diary

FOR all their public-school talk about honour and values, the Tories haven't got any. Given the opportunity to show some integrity, they prefer to tell pack of lies. Arthur Gould, 105 Park Road, Loughborough LE11 2ED.

Omithology

WOULD like to clarify a few points regarding your City Column of October 26 about fund take-overs. There was no "vulture fund" operated by Peregrine. Hermes, as long-term holders (16 per cent of the fund) asked Peregrine to help gather other stockholder support to join us in realising shareholder value. As a result of our action, which was supported by 95 per cent of shareholders, the fund is now open-ended and therefore trades at NAV, rather than up to a 33 per cent discount seen in previous years.

The BBC is losing its voice

WE are deeply concerned about the consequences of John Birt's planned reorganisation of the BBC (BBC merges radio and television production, November 7). The implications are profoundly disturbing. The main aim is to enable the BBC to grab the commercial pickings of digital broadcasting. The thrust is towards homogenisation with the commercial sector. The emphasis is on delivery rather than content.

The BBC is losing its voice

THE most suitable suggestions only if they are aware of the thinking behind commissioning policy. The BBC's restructuring processes have excluded creative artists. The Writers' Guild was not approached for input. Nor have writers any clear idea of how we will be expected to liaise in the future, either with BBC Production (which will make our work) or BBC Broadcast (which will commission it).

A Country Diary

THE WRINKLE: "Winter's returning song" awakes this year as a stillness; a quiet sunrise on silver-grey frosts which fix the landscape in a moonlit glow. The day is bright and blue, still and strangely quiet. Evening falls early with cold glamorous tresses - the lingering sunset colours of that flaming ocean of the west begin to bleed from the sky and into the woodlands. The saffron glow of larches, and the inky blue-green oaks and pines, have for a brief, dying moment. All around are pools of shire countryside, and streams of mist and, like the mists, the sounds of the landscape are separated by a cool, still space. Without a breath of wind, the plume of steam from the sugar-beet factory stands erect, where the sweet soils of the lowlands are turned to sugar. The last flash of light marks from a meander in the Severn and a small pool against a dark wood. Just as darkness grips, all the pheasants begin their clockwork alarm together. The birds make a final communal salute to the light, which spreads from the west until it fades like the sound of a high-speed train into the east. Then the owls start. The first voice has lost all trace of summer's softness now and has a harsher, rasping screech: the sound of cold blood from the west and into the dusk. Other owls answer from the dark, impenetrable boundaries of their woods. Suddenly, the ghostly forms of antlered bodies flicker, their sharp hooves crackling through the static of crisp leaves into the deepest night of trees. One star above the branches, north and darkness.

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Handwritten note: 13/11/96

Diary

John Duncan

HARRODS, the Kensington supermarket, is never knowingly underpriced, but the £1 charge for their toilets is perfectly justified by the gorgeous surroundings provided for top people to point Sir Percival at the antique porcelain. However, the fee has proved such good value that the toilets have become a profit centre in their own right, according to senior staff. Those at the store suggest that the company is thus making money out of pish crap, à la Ratner cut-glass decanter, are heading for a slap. Indeed, Harrods' generosity knows no bounds. If you spend £100 in the store you can now pee for free. These cheers for the Al Fayeds.

SECOND instalment of the sensational serialisation of the page three lead from November 5 Lynn News. Our amputee hero has been caught with £200 of fake £20 notes in his pants. The story continues. Mark Van Der Zwart, prosecuting, told the court that the defendant had offered one of the duds notes to a prostitute in Wisbech on December 19 last year but before accepting it she had tested it and found it was a fake. "Is that in your pocket or are you just pleased to see me? More tomorrow."

TARA Palmer-Tomkinson has pretty hot competition for the most self-important social column — last week's Sunday Times "article" was illustrated with a picture of her and her sister — but TP-T is different class. Various theories abound on why she calls herself the It Girl. Nicholas Frampton-Green suggests from Monaco that it is because she is too busy going to parties to make up her mind whether she is male or female, who a close pal Willy Van Der Kerhof tells us from Grand Cayman that it is because she is one of Europe's leading experts on Information Technology.

It certainly can't be anything to do with her being incredibly cool, judging by reports of her behaviour at the party for The First Wives Club. TP-T was keen to chat up Val Kilmer, who had taken up his position outside the ladies' toilets. She wasn't having much luck, but it took more than a totally bored stare to put off an It girl, and TP-T drew on all her school-disco social graces to get her man. "Oh do come to the Grand with us," said it. "There'll be lots of pretty girls there." Wow, cool line. If only we were it people too.

THE tedious hand-wringing over Crash — the Cronenberg auto-erotic film — has had one beneficiary. So upset by the sex 'n' shunting film were the members of the London Film Festival far more suitable for helping them on to their high horses. Some Mother's Son, about the hunger strikes Bobby Sands directed by former INLA prisoner Terry George, was scheduled for first British viewing at the LFF last Sunday. Which of course is Remembrance Sunday and not them, suitable at all. Happily the error was realised in time and the screening goes ahead next week.

MICHAEL Heseltine turned up for a speaking engagement yesterday without his reading glasses, and was unable to see his speech until a spare pair was found from the audience. Could this explain why the line between right and wrong on using civil servants for party-political work seemed so blurred the other day?

AS YOU probably already know, the latest Thierry Mugler male fragrance (what used to be called after-shave) is launched today. It's called A*Men and one of the ingredients is tar. "The tar evokes the memory of long and lazy journeys along American highways," said a smelly PR. Presumably then a hint of four-day-old underpants, left-over burgers, the sweat of an over-flooding ashtray are also in there somewhere too. Hang on a mo' Mr Mugler. Someone in the office is wearing it already. Counterfeit!

WE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE FUN TO TRY IT FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME

Bullies behind the net curtains

Commentary Catherine Bennett

FOR some time it has been hard to imagine which, if any, activities could conceivably preclude admission to the House of Commons. If an MP can lie to the House, if he can maintain five concurrent sexual partners, or accept money for questions, or drink-drive his car into toddlers, or assault road protesters, and still claim the right to govern, can there be any limits to the indulgence of institutions? All at once, it seems there are. One thing the Commons cannot abide, and simply will not tolerate, is the prospect of a man who is said to beat his wife.



Acknowledgements to: Ford Madox Ford's 'Work'

Worlds apart

THE POLITICS of time — unlike the politics of pay — is not an aching power-struggle between men, women and the state which defines not only public but private life. Mr Major's mission to Excerpt the European directive on the 48-hour working week may appease his Euro-critic, and thus appear to reunite his party. But it will not excite organised employees and — worse — it will expose his party once again to the charge that it speaks with forked tongue about family values.

A question of decency

THE EU's working-time directive is, we hear, going to drive companies' costs up and force some out of business. In fact the so-called "48-hour week" will have little or no impact on all but the most exploitative employers. British business has nothing to fear. The rules in the directive are highly flexible and allow for many exceptions. The Working Time Directive cannot actually stop 48 hours in a week if they agree to do so.

and had also set upon his ex-wife. Wingfield has described these allegations as "untrue rumours", but has decided to stand down. Had he been elected an MP, Wingfield might well have been consulted by battered women in his own constituency. Besides, everyone agrees that domestic violence is unignorable. Only last week, Janet Anderson, Labour's Shadow Minister for Women, said: "Domestic violence against women is something that should not be tolerated in a civilised society."

Agreed — but how do we go about not tolerating it? A resolute refusal to protect the House of Commons from alleged wife-beaters, but what the Mail on Sunday has done for Wingfield, all the might of tabloid Britain has been unable to do to Geoffrey Boycott. According to a BBC spokesman, the recent allegations of assault by Margaret Moore have "no bearing" on Boycott's campaigning career. Boycott denies Moore's story, saying that he fell on the floor as he tried to "rescue" her, somehow contriving to black both her own eyes.

Both providers and parents who have trespassed across the private threshold into the public realm. The never enjoyed economic equality with men, nor domestic democracy, and their ambitions for economic — and time — equality were swiftly exhausted by the inauguration of Thatcherism at the revolution ran and ran — by being everywhere and doing everything, mothers have exposed the bad faith at the core of current political pieties.

What this tells us is that the most de-regulated society in Europe is the most polarised: far from flexibility encouraging greater domestic democracy, it has re-inforced old identities and atavistic polarisations, both between men and women and between children and private. The row about the European directive, shadowed by research revealing middle-class men's flight from women and children, ought to revitalise a movement to model the modern worker on the most marginalised woman. Only she confounds that imaginary separation between public and private, because she utilises waged work with the world of children. Only she takes care of others as well as herself. Rewarded by rights as well as responsibilities, she should be our role model.

Beatrix Campbell argues that the 48-hour-week row highlights the Government's hypocrisy over 'the family', while below an employer welcomes the plans

into a *fin de siècle* moral crusade which masks a problem with no name: the new man reincarnated as a middle-class Andy Capp. The de-regulators suffer from historical amnesia as well as economic essentialism. For them the family is a firm and women's exile from other firms — the ones that pay — is an evolutionary fit. This is where Charles Darwin and Adam Smith meet. But history reproaches their notion of natural order.

erant of men's bad behaviour. But you do not have to believe in Pandora's bizarre attempt to portray women as the principal assailants in domestic affray, to accept that domestic violence is more muted an issue than some women's groups might want to accept. We know that many women are beaten and terrorised by their partners, and deserve much more help than they receive. The continuing shortage of refuges for such women, 25 years since Erin Pizzey launched hers in Chiswick, is lamentable.

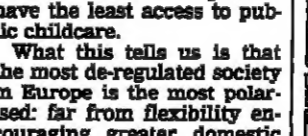
But does all domestic violence fit this particular pet term? In a recent Guardian report, members of lesbian couples said that they, too, were victims of domestic abuse. We are regularly informed that domestic violence cuts across classes, with 25 per cent of middle-class sufferers, to 30 per cent of working-class women. Are all these women, many of whom must be capable of supporting themselves, unable to resolve their own domestic problems?

FROM the outside, many couples' relationships seem odd, or imbalanced, or downright nasty, and yet no one interferes. There are women who stay with men who use prostitutes; women who stay to be insulted by idle male parasites; women who stay with men who have sex changes with husbands who acquire a belated appetite for young men, even with men who decide to go into politics. In all such cases, it is accepted that the women, as grown-ups, should be allowed to embrace, if they choose, the sources of their grief or discomfort.

Similarly, in Gascoigne's case, we must accept that his wife, the independent and beautiful Sheryl, decided, of her own free will, to marry and reproduce with a repulsive and barbarically behaved cat who had spent much of their courtship beating her up and frightening her children. "I'd grab her by the back of the head, pull her hair back and bang her head," Gascoigne divulged in a 1994 confession. "She'd cry out, 'Stop it! Please stop it! I can't take any more.'"

Most of us, I suspect, would have concluded, at length, that this was not Mr Right. Sheryl thought differently. Today, she continues to thwart her supporters, making no public complaint and inviting no police action. It's baffling and a bit disappointing. It does not mean, however, that Sheryl should be treated like a child, and saved from herself.

Meddle with Widmerpool at your peril



David McKie

THE report in the London Evening Standard was thick with unintentional menace. Channel 4, it Potter and Trood had turned back at work on the serialisation of Anthony Powell's 12-volume sequence A Dance To The Music Of Time. The project would cost £9 million. Alan Bennett and John Gielgud had been hired, along with a stranger to television, Simon Russell Beale, in the role of Kenneth Widmerpool. The adapter, Hugh Whitmore, planned to be bold. He was carving the novels down to just four instalments; and, because so much of the action in Powell takes place in parties and drawing rooms, was developing on-screen incidents only hinted at in the books. That is where I began to feel queasy. But more ominous still was an observation attributed to Russell Beale.

Widmerpool, by far the most dominant character in the story — was based, he'd been told, on Herbert Morrison. I hope by now someone has disabused him. If he hasn't, this series will prove the biggest disaster since Rhodes. True, Widmerpool becomes a Labour MP, a minister under Attlee, and after he loses his seat in the 1955 election, a Labour life peer; but Morrison he is not, by 1,000 miles. Though perhaps a better model nowadays as Peter Mandelson's granddad, Morrison — deputy leader to Attlee, and beaten for the succession by Gaitskell in 1955 — had something of Widmerpool's monstrous will, but the resemblance ceases. Widmerpool's origins seem humble to those around him at school (which seems to be Eton) but his circumstances are still impossibly grand compared to those of Morrison, one of ten children from Brixton, starting out as an army clerk, fighting his way up through local government almost to the top.

You don't get people like Herbert Morrison in Anthony Powell — not major characters. Apart from the wartime sequences, the working classes scarcely exist — except in minor inventions like Lord Erridge's malevolent butler, Smith, who anyway owes more to Charles Addams than to reality. That's one of the reasons why some people of taste and discernment recoil from these books with a shudder. Powell, they cry, is a snob (an allegation hard to dispute if one's

Meddle with Widmerpool at your peril

read his diaries). He's a social snob, but also a literary snob, far too keen on displaying deep acquaintance with writers no normal person has read. Does one really want to waste one's time on a world full of aristocratic parties in Eaton Square where everyone seems obsessed with the Hon Frederica Tolland taking up — at her age! — with someone like Dicky Umfraville?

Well, oddly enough, I do. We'll for Frederica Tolland and Dicky Umfraville, but for so many others in Powell's abundant gallery: the cheerfully melancholic minor composer Hugh Moreland; his depressive friend the critic MacIntrick and MacIntrick's terminally wife; the eccentric peer Alf Erridge; the appalling, irresistible, super-hussy Prunella Filton, whose excesses make Forgive me like Mother Teresa and who (stretching credulity) suddenly marries Widmerpool. They may not be true to life, but they echo life, and the way as one ages one senses the ultimate outcome of people first encountered when young. If some of Powell's characters undergo metamorphosis, so do people in real life too. Why would ever have guessed that Bernard Ingham, that staunch Yorkshire socialist colleague of my early days on the Guardian, would have ended his life as a Thatcher trusty and a columnist in the rightwing press?

Which brings us back to Powell's The Music Of Time, to the metamorphosis of Widmerpool — first seen looming up through the fog on a solitary run on page three of the first of these books, "in a sweater once white and a cap at least a size too small, huddling unevenly, though with determination, on the flat heels of spiked running shoes"; a paradigm, this, of a life which is going to propel him from early buffoonism into solemn, pompous power and authority, but will end in a humiliation and death at the hands of one whose will is even stronger than his.

BECAUSE Widmerpool is so formidable a creation, there's a danger that television will transform The Music Of Time into The Widmerpool Story; adding to all those first-name movies now in our cinema (Emma; Charles; and the like) a work that is basically Ken. As for the model, that is no longer a mystery. People used to believe it was Powell's brother-in-law, Lord Longford, a theory denounced by Powell, who complained that Longford himself had been putting around that story. Lord Rees-Mogg has also been mentioned; that's equally off the mark. Eventually the author revealed that the nearest thing to a model was a civil servant (who once worked in the Cabinet Office) called Denis Cuthbert Capel-Dunn. If Beale is seeking a template, that is where he should start. But much better to stick to the books.

Landmark for ancient mariners. Spectacle for modern travellers. The towering sun temple at Konark in Orissa once gladdened the hearts of mariners hauling up the North East coast of India. Now it provides gasps of admiration as one of India's most vivid architectural treasures—a stupendous 24-wheeled chariot belonging to the sun god, Surya. A few miles from the capital, Bhubaneswar, you'll find Chilika, India's largest lake, where rare migratory birds wheel in for the winter. As for tiger and leopard, few wildlife sanctuaries can rival Simlipal to the north. Orissa is one of India's best kept secrets. Let yourself in on it. For a free brochure call 0133 211999 or post this coupon to, India Tourist Office, 7 Cork Street, London W1X 1LN. Name: Address: india changes you

10 OBITUARIES

Eddie Harris

In tune with pop and jazz

EDDIE Harris, the saxophonist and composer who died aged 62, was the kind of jazz musician whose career path involved the cultivation of a thick hide.

At the height of the swing era, and grew up in the rising years of bebop. He studied the piano as a child, and sang in Baptist church choirs with his cousin. It was as a teenage pianist that he made his first professional appearances.



Eddie Harris... a serious musician, despite attempts to label him as frivolous

The new jazz audience that turned on to the music in the late 1960s.

Harris also turned his ingenuity towards making a technological mark. He constantly invented new hybrid instruments.

ways a serious musician inside Harris, and if he appeared to be a frivolous or insubstantial one, it was the unforgiving nature of some sections of the jazz audience that made him so.

John Fordham Eddie Harris, saxophonist and composer; born October 20 1934; died, November 5 1996

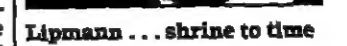
Fred Lipmann

A watch on the workers

"L'IP, C'EST fini," said Prime Minister Pierre Messmer in 1974, after riot police temporarily halted a staff sit-in at the watch factory in Besancon.

In his 32 years as managing director of the company founded by his grandfather, he had created a shrine to the watch on the factory site, a few kilometres from the Swiss border.

the company's sales grew by just 3 per cent a year against 10 per cent for the watch sector in general. Lip's share of the French market declined from 30 per cent to 7 per cent.



Lipmann... shrine to time

Patents, which limped on until 1984 when bankruptcy struck again. Finally rescued in 1981 by a French precision-maker, Lip now has fewer than 200 staff.

Alexander d'Arbeloff

Restless search for the broader horizons

THE LIFE of Alexander d'Arbeloff, who has died aged 101, was impressive both for its great length and the astonishing variety of cultural and entrepreneurial projects into which he threw himself.

organisation with a new name, Societe Generale de Films, when d'Arbeloff's cousin Jacques Grinlet (also a Russian exile) became involved.

ideas: studying a map of South America, he noted that tiny, landlocked Paraguay had no outlets for its products and decided that what this country needed was a major road to Brazil.

But d'Arbeloff maintained links with South America, returning frequently to initiate and oversee other development projects.

several well known personalities, including Francoise Sagan and Gipsy Rose Lee, though this film was never released.

Philip Pilkington Alexander d'Arbeloff, entrepreneur; born October 21, 1895; died October 30, 1996

Tim Gidal

Visual novella master

TIM GIDAL, who has died aged 87, was one of the last in that generation of photojournalists who created press photography's inter-war heyday.

Germany for Palestine in 1936. He had pursued his disrupted studies in art history and economics from Munich to Berlin and thence to Basle, where he obtained his doctorate in 1935.

with Robert Capa (1948), to The Freudians (Munich 1990), every subject that mattered to him was made into a portrait.

interaction of the understanding of the photographer and his subject. And poles apart from the more fashionable conceptual images.

Amarendra Hopkinson Tim (Gidalewitsch) N Gidal, photojournalist; born May 15, 1908; died October 4, 1996

Letter

Professor Graham Owens writes: Your obituary of Bokassa (November 5) might have added that his self-crowning as Emperor (paid for by France) cost up to £20 million.

Death Notices

BALL, Simon aged 38, Senior Lecturer in (Environmental) Law at the University of Sheffield; Co-ordinator of Sheffield Students Lacrosse Club. Died suddenly on Saturday 11 November 1996.

Birthdays

The Most Rev Dr George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, 61; Adrienne Corzi, actress, 66; Joan Lester, Labour MP, 66; Alexandra Shulman, editor, Vogue, 39; Sir Donald Thompson, Conservative MP, 66; Howard Wilkinson, football manager, 53.

Jackdaw



"COMPUTERS in the future may weigh no more than 1.5 tons." Popular Mechanics, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1948.

vanced Computing Systems Division of IBM, 1968, commenting on the microchip.

the penis in a paper costume evolved from this sexually enlightened populace. Kokigami originated in 8th century Japan and it has its roots within the art of Tsutsumi, or packaging, which was solely a practice of Japanese aristocrats.

Kokigami ceased to be the exclusive practice of the aristocratic class. Today every social strata of Japanese society partakes in the pleasure of wrapping their "packages" in over 600 types of paper animals, spirits and things.

home, then peters out rapidly during their married life. After 30, posh girl is too embroiled in charities and school runs for sex.

seems to have any cash in it — all Daddy's money is tied up in Lloyd's.

Simon Mills asks whether the Camillas of the world are really worth it in Elie.

No control HENRY Good, a UK financial printing company, has been writing to customers to offer its services as a top quality business publisher.

Handwritten text in Arabic script: "سورة الفاتحة"

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

PIA critic quits watchdog

Pensions review behind protest

Richard Miles

A DIRECTOR of the Personal Investment Authority yesterday quit unexpectedly in protest at the way the financial services watchdog is handling the review of the personal pensions mis-selling fiasco.

British Gas drops £1bn legal action against DTI

Chris Barrie
Business Correspondent

B BRITISH Gas suffered a double blow yesterday when it was forced to drop a £1.2 billion legal action against the Government and to accept the resignation of a senior executive at its TransCo pipelines business.

Call for Ofgas to sort out chaos

THE Gas Consumers Council is poised to announce sweeping changes to its funding arrangements and has begun a fundamental review of its structure, writes Chris Barrie.



from people who were hoodwinked into leaving company pension schemes for a private plan.

DTI bars more rogue directors

Nicholas Barnister

A RECORD number of rogue businessmen and women have been disqualified this year from becoming company directors, according to figures yesterday from the Department of Trade and Industry.

Ex-Barings executive beats job ban

Roger Cowe

A FORMER senior executive at Barings Bank yesterday succeeded in overturning attempts by regulators to ban him from working in the City.

insurance companies for their tardiness in handling the review, it has fined and reprimanded more than 20 independent firms for failure to return documentation.

Mortgage jitters

Sarah Pyle

THE spectre of sharply rising mortgage rates has been raised by the Nationwide's decision yesterday to jack up its home-loan rate by a quarter of a percentage point.

Disabled dispute threatens building society windfalls

Sarah Pyle

THE Government yesterday threatened to destabilise the whole building society conversion process by rejecting claims from the industry that windfall bonuses cannot be paid directly to disabled account holders.

Notebook

Sceptics left in cold over EMU



Edited by Patrick Donovan

A RCH-Euro-sceptic John Redwood may enjoy the growing support within the Tory back benches as he won little applause in chilly Harrogate yesterday as he attempted to harangue industrial leaders with his apocalyptic views about the dangers of a single European currency.

So much hot air

B BRITISH Gas threatens to sue the government for £1.2 billion, claiming that it has effectively been lumbered with unnecessary tax for North sea oil and gas.

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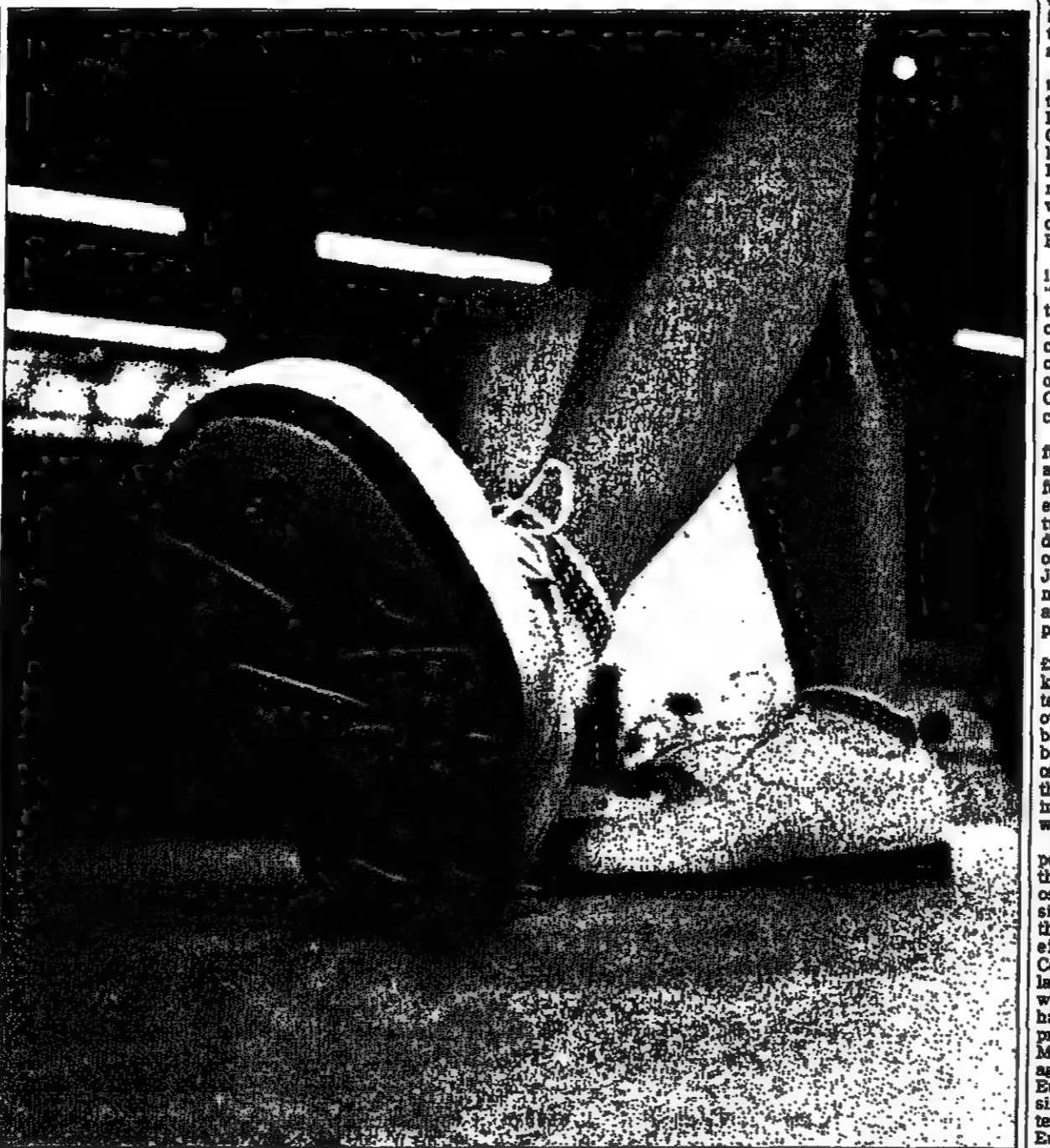
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File driver... A model puts a spike-proof clubhouse carpet through its paces on the catwalk at the Eurogolf trade exhibition in Birmingham which opened yesterday. The carpet was invented by Gradus of Macclesfield.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS			
Australia 2.034	France 8.09	Italy 2.446	Singapore 2.26
Austria 16.96	Germany 2.2675	Malta 0.57	South Africa 7.57
Belgium 49.52	Greece 35.03	Netherlands 2.20	Spain 202.00
Canada 2.15	Hong Kong 12.47	New Zealand 2.27	Sweden 10.72
Cyprus 0.73	India 58.85	Norway 10.12	Switzerland 2.01
Denmark 9.25	Ireland 0.2675	Portugal 244.00	Turkey 156.842
Finland 7.20	Israel 1.33	Saudi Arabia 5.16	USA 1.6175

Supplied by Reuters Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

CBI

In Harrogate

The three Es — Europe, economy and election — dominate debate as business backs single currency

Malcolm Rifkind attempts to paper over cracks in the Tories position on Europe during a speech to the CBI conference yesterday



George derides 'EMU dash'

Simon Beavis and Larry Elliott

GROWING business support for Britain to join a single currency was tempered yesterday when the Governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George, attacked the "hectic" dash for monetary union and warned that some member states were taking "artificial stimulants" to meet the 1999 starting date.

But his strongly sceptical stance later assuaged by leading Tory Eurosceptic, John Redwood — was given short shrift by delegates to the CBI conference in Harrogate, with many delegates calling for greater political leadership on the issue and less fogging.

The governor warned the conference that there were risks that monetary union might be too expansionary for some countries and too deflationary for others.

Mr George said the convergence criteria in the Maastricht treaty had been designed to limit the risks of divergent economic performance across the European Union. "I doubt whether the architects of the treaty envisaged the present hectic dash for the line ... and I doubt whether they envisaged that

Rifkind vs Redwood

THE FOREIGN Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, yesterday tried to keep the lid on Conservative divisions over Europe in the face of one of the fiercest attacks yet on the single currency from former leadership challenger John Redwood, writes Richard Thomas and Simon Beavis.

Mr Redwood told the CBI a single currency would cause widespread economic damage and attacked the political ambitions of German leader Helmut Kohl. "Chancellor Kohl wants to build a country called Europe, governed from a city called Brussels, with its economy directed from a bank in Frankfurt," he said.

Asked if he agreed, Mr Rifkind admitted that there were differences of opinion with the German government, but said Mr Kohl's objectives were honourable. "It is not the language I would have chosen," he said.

In a nod to the party's Eurosceptic wing, he stressed that the option of a single currency remained open and he cast doubt over whether the first wave of countries would be able to form a monetary union in 1999.

Refusing to be drawn on whether Britain should sign up, Mr Rifkind said that an active role in Europe was one of the four pillars of UK foreign policy.

Mr Redwood criticised the whole EMU project as disastrous for British business. "Joining a single currency is like being in the RRM, but throwing away the key having locked the door. We would never get out again."

some of the runners might be tempted to take artificial stimulants in order to get there."

He said that the benefits of exchange-rate certainty and lower transaction costs had to be balanced against the possibility that a single interest rate might not be compatible with the domestic economic needs of individual countries.

If domestic policy needs were likely to diverge in a serious way, it could "give rise to serious tensions, including, possibly, persistently higher unemployment."

It would be better, in that case, for each country to pursue anti-inflationary policies outside monetary union.

Peter Sutherland, a former European Commissioner and

currently chairman of Goldman Sachs, said that the single market would fall without a single currency and derided Eurosceptics for clinging to arguments about sovereignty that had already been conceded. "I firmly believe that the internal market demands a single currency and without one will ultimately face a crisis of major proportions."

Sir David Simon, chairman of BP, echoed his warnings describing devaluation as the "illusion that you're still scoring runs by shortening the pitch."

Sir John Hoskyns, chairman of the Burton group, warned that EMU could cost retailers across Europe alone £22 billion to adjust their business for a single currency, which he described as the highest defensive margin in history.

But the goal of EMU was the result of "political ambition, self-deception, sloppy thinking and creative accounting. It is power politics. We should certainly be grateful that the Prime Minister negotiated an opt out because we are not yet locked into this doomed enterprise."

But few delegates speaking from the floor agreed. And the majority view was that moves to a single currency would be desirable for business.

Clarke's loan rate policy rejected

Larry Elliott, Economics Editor

THE CBI yesterday called on the Chancellor to use his Budget rather than interest rates to clamp down on consumer spending.

Business leaders said Kenneth Clarke's increase in base rates had been unnecessary, and further rises in sterling triggered by the higher rates would threaten exports and industry generally.

Andrew Buxton, chairman of Barclays Bank and of the CBI's Economic Situation Committee, said: "The recent interest rate rise was not necessary now."

He accepted it was right for the Government to act early against inflation, but argued that the surge in sterling had compounded exporters' problems of weak demand in

Europe. "We should not rush into interest rate rises without thinking of our exporters."

Mr Buxton said the main problem facing the economy was not inflation but high public borrowing, and called for a "boring Budget" that would tighten fiscal policy.

However, the Bank of England governor, Eddie George, told the conference: "It may well be that some further rise will become necessary in due course — and that was the conclusion in our latest inflation report."

He rejected the view that the rise in sterling meant higher base rates were not needed to cool down the economy. "The stronger exchange rate does nothing directly to restrain the domestically driven upswing in demand."

Adam Turner, the CBI's director general, said the need for a tough Budget had increased since the CBI launched its Budget submission two months ago.

"We are concerned about relying on interest rates as a counter-inflationary mechanism. It feeds through into the exchange rate and the competitiveness of industry."

Alastair Eperon, chairman of the CBI's distributive trades panel, said there was no overwhelming demand for tax cuts, saying the electorate was too cynical to see them as anything other than a bribe.

Allied Domecq finds breaking up is hard to do

OUTLOOK/Dispirited drinks group finds demerger too costly, writes Roger Cowe

APOTENTIAL bill of £200 million was one of the main reasons Allied Domecq rejected pleas from the City to split up its spirits and retailing businesses.

Chairman Sir Christopher Hogg said yesterday — as he announced disappointing results for the year to August — that the board had decided demerger was not the answer to improving shareholder value. It would concentrate on improving the existing businesses, although breaking up might return as an option in a few years' time.

Investors' expectations of a demerger were heightened earlier this year when Sir Christopher took the chair, because of his record in splitting up Courtaulds in 1992. He admitted yesterday that this had been "a seductive option" because of investor pressure.

But, on top of the huge cost, the board had decided it could not afford top management attention being distracted for up to a year from the key problem of turning around the operations.

He pointed out that there was more synergy between the two businesses than had generally been assumed, especially the financial benefits of marrying the overseas earnings and the cash flow of the spirits business with the cash-hungry UK pub operation.

Sir Christopher made it clear that Allied's businesses were not fit to stand on their own as independent quoted companies. He said it had taken five years to get Courtaulds Textiles into a fit state to be spun off.

It has already taken longer than that to sort out the accident-prone Allied, which has had a miserable 1996 after a disappointing and confused 1995 and 1996. Sir Christopher remarked that the group had been in a state of flux since the 1985 merger that created the group. Since then Lyons has come and gone, as has Carlsberg, and the company — which was one of the big four brewers — now makes beer only in the cellars of its Firkin pub chain.

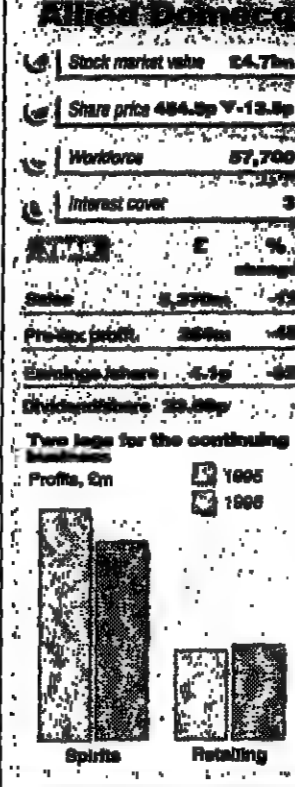
The exit from brewing explains the depth of the plunge in profits, which exaggerates the poor operating performance. Allied sold its interest in the Carlsberg-Tetley joint venture for £205 million, but incurred a total loss on the deal of £309 million. The monopolies authorities are still debating the implications of the deal for Bass, which is buying the stake.

Whatever happens, Allied is shot of the brewing millionaires and it knows its pubs will not have to pay excessive beer prices once the existing supply agreement runs out at the end of next year.

Even allowing for these exceptional costs, however, Allied's results are pretty poor. Sir Christopher and his chief executive Tony Hales readily admitted. On a comparable basis, pre-tax profits were down by 11 per cent, with a small increase in retailing offset by a plunge in spirits profits from £486 million to £418 million.

That is mainly the consequence of massive destocking. Allied decided last year, in common with its competitors, that it had been showing out of control. Rabina and the like that were just sitting in distributors' warehouses. The answer was to ship less booze, which therefore hit sales and profits.

So the business is now leaner — 1,500 people have been made redundant — but it remains to be seen just how much fatter. The spirits business has lost the glitter it had when it seemed possible to keep pushing up profit margins to compensate for low sales growth — although Mr Hales insisted that spirits remain attractive as a high-margin, brand-led, cash-generative business. Perhaps one day it will be attractive enough to stand on its own, but not for a year or two.



£5bn insurance merger

Richard Miles

CONSOLIDATION in the life insurance industry intensified yesterday when Franco's largest insurers, Axa and Union des Assurances de Paris, revealed merger plans in a £5.6bn share swap.

The combined group, whose name has yet to be decided, will have £445 billion (£280 billion) under management, and will rank second in the world behind Japan's Nippon Life Insurance.

The deal will drive together two British life insurers, Sun Life, 50 per cent owned by UAP, and Axa Equity & Law. The two companies will form the third biggest life insurer in Britain.

The announcement took the industry by surprise. The

companies said in a statement that the merger would enable Axa and UAP, privatised in 1994, to build a group with an unparalleled strategic position "in the face of increasingly stiff global competition".

Axa's chairman, Claude Bebear, who will head the management board of the group, said the partnership would create significant economies of scale and make possible the streamlining of a number of operations, including asset management. But he insisted there would be no job losses at either company. UAP employs 18,000, while Axa has a workforce of 10,000 worldwide.

The two companies said it was too soon to say how the merger would affect the UK subsidiaries, but executives from both sides are meeting

in London today to set out a strategy for closer co-operation between the companies.

Axa Equity & Law, acquired by the French insurer in 1987, has £11 billion of assets under management and employs 1,800. Sun Life's holding company floated 40 per cent of its shares this year. It has £19 billion under management and a staff of 3,500.

One City analyst said it was likely that Sun Life and Axa Equity & Law would retain their separate identities for some time, though ultimately they would share resources and administrative processes.

He said: "On insurance premiums, this deal will put Sun Life and Axa Equity & Law behind Standard Life and Prudential as the biggest life insurer in the UK."

Jobs go in Norweb deal

Colin Weston, Industrial Correspondent

UNIONS fear up to 1,000 jobs will be lost following yesterday's announcement that United Utilities is to sell Norweb Retail to rival high-street electrical chain Comet.

United announced earlier this year it wanted to sell the loss-making operation. The move is the latest in a series of closures and mergers in electrical retailing, caused by poor demand, cut-throat competition and mergers and acquisitions across the utilities sector.

Under the terms of the proposed sale, Comet, which is owned by Kingfisher, will pay £51 million in cash, less a deduction of

£22 million to reflect restructuring costs.

Norweb Retail, which operates mainly in the north-west of England, has 81 out-of-town stores, 87 high street sites and annual sales of £280 million.

Comet said Norweb's out-of-town stores would be integrated into the Comet chain early next year. Norweb's withdrawal from high-street operations would continue. Comet said it would decide in February which stores to close.

The trade union Unison said that this could mean 1,000 job losses among the 2,800 staff employed in the stores, at Norweb Retail's Bolton head office, and a distribution centre in Manchester, both of which would be closed. The job

cuts would be in addition to the 2,500 announced by United Utilities in March.

Eddie Styring, Comet's chief executive, said: "While there will be some redundancies, Comet's acquisition means that many Norweb Retail jobs will be saved." The company had promised redundancy terms similar to those offered under Norweb Retail's severance scheme.

Brian Staples, chief executive of United Utilities, said the company's disposal programme had now raised £267 million towards its target of £350 million.

United Utilities is the holding company for Norweb, the regional electricity company, and North West Water, which merged in November last year.

News in brief

Water cut-offs continue to dry up

THE number of households being disconnected for non-payment of water bills is continuing to fall, according to new figures from industry watchdog Ofwat. Disconnections fell 21 per cent to 1.974 in the six months to September, the lowest half figure since Ofwat started keeping records in 1990.

Ofwat said its guidelines on debt and disconnection had now been adopted by the whole industry, but it pointed out that two water supply companies, Mid Kent and Portsmouth, still had relatively high disconnection rates. Mike Clark, the managing director of Mid Kent, said 90 per cent of those disconnected were reconnected within 24 hours. — Nicholas Bamister

Clubhaus tees up Gold Fund

CLUBHAUS, the European golf club operator, yesterday unveiled a £12.7 million deal to acquire Golf Fund, owner of two Midlands golf courses.

The all-shares offer, which carries a cash-and-shares alternative valuing Golf Fund at £12 million, caps a period of rapid expansion for Clubhaus since it was demerged from Ex-Lands Group in February and floated on the stock market. The shares closed unchanged at 82½p. — Dominic Walsh

Construction booster

CONSTRUCTION firms received a sharp boost to orders as manufacturers increased expansion plans and the housing market recovery fed through the system, latest official figures showed yesterday. Orders were especially high in the infrastructure sector, while private sector housing increased for the third quarter in a row and helped boost the overall value of new work to more than £2.8 billion in September.

New construction work in the three months to September was worth £5.4 billion, the Department of the Environment said, 3 per cent higher than at the same time last year. House building in the private sector was 7 per cent higher in the third quarter than it was a year ago. — Sarah Ryle

Colonial bonanza

SOME 270,000 British investors with Colonial, the Australian mutual financial services group, are to receive shares worth at least £285, after its members voted yesterday to support its conversion plans. Colonial won 97 per cent approval from voting members in four countries, including New Zealand and Fiji, clearing the way for a stock market flotation in Australia next summer with a capitalisation of A\$1.65 billion (£790 million).

But despite holding 55 per cent of its A\$36 billion assets in the UK, Colonial said yesterday it remained undecided about seeking a second listing on the London Stock Exchange. — Richard Miles

Good causes lift profits

SUPPORTING good causes is good for profits, according to research for Business in the Community (BITC), published yesterday to support a new initiative on cause-related marketing led by Cadbury Schweppes chairman Dominic Cadbury.

More than four out of five consumers said that if the price and quality of products was the same, they prefer a product associated with a good cause. — Roger Cowe



Cafédirect is a brand of high quality coffee that guarantees a fairer share of the profits goes to growers.

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Racing Gale to repeat chasing promise

Ken Oliver

FOLLOWERS of trainers and jockeys statistics will be interested in the proceedings at this afternoon's meeting at Worcester where David Gandolfo, the Wantage trainer, has booked Richard Dunwoody for three races.

The combination has clicked six times this season for a 23 per cent strike rate and that impressive tally can be increased with the aid of Bletschhorn Bard, Mouse Bird and Around the Gale.

Around the Gale, a full brother to the stable's star chaser, Gales Cavalier, looks an exciting addition to the novice chasing ranks.

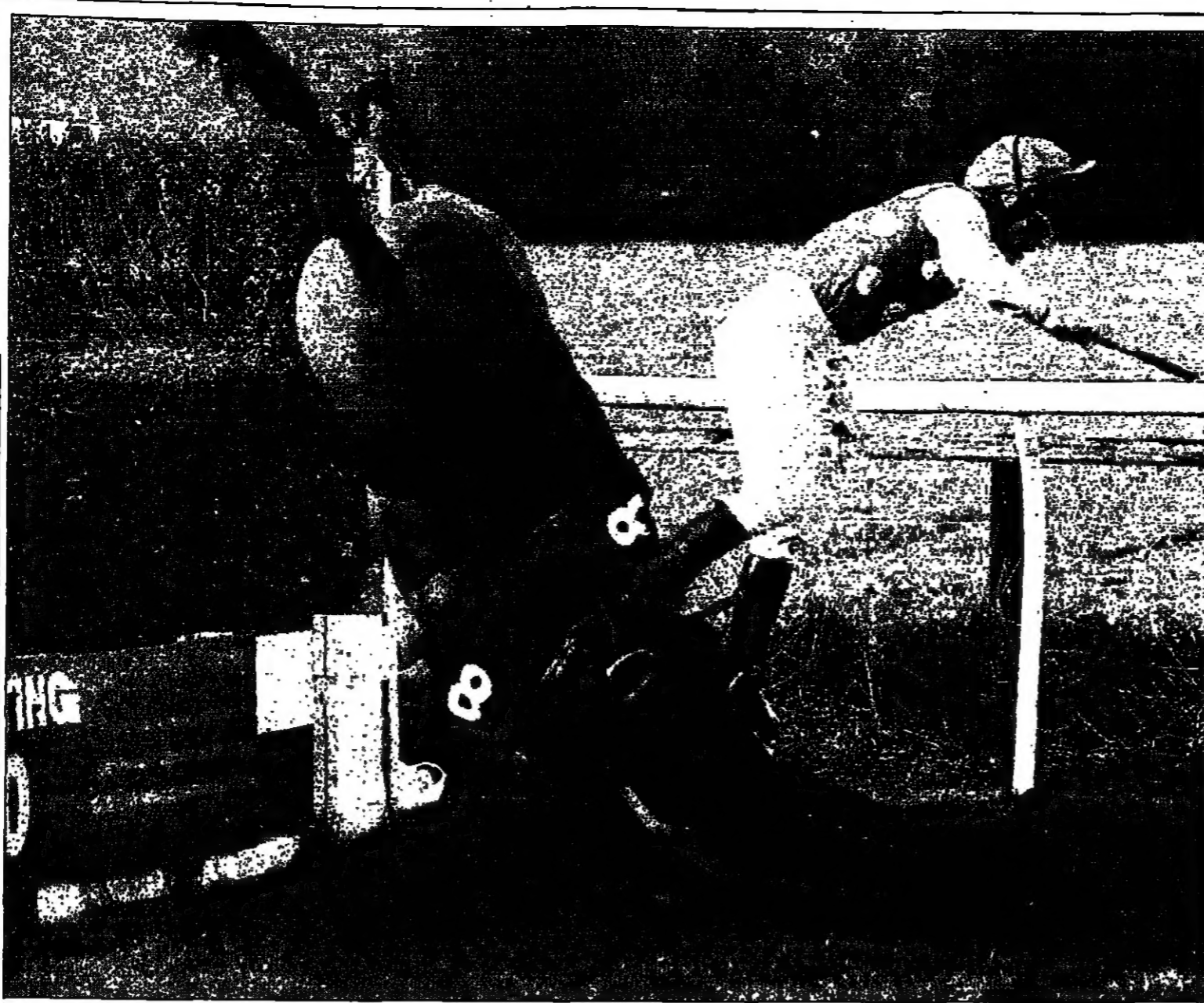
Dunwoody, who was in the saddle three weeks ago, was impressed with the five-year-old and he will certainly take some beating in the valuable Worcester Chase.

Wistley Wonder, from Nigel Taiton-Davies's in-form stable, could prove the biggest threat. He made his chasing debut at Haydock a week ago and looked the likely winner until blundering and unshipping his rider at the 13th, with the race going to Imperial Wings.

Castlekyllie is another interesting rival. He won his final four hurdle races when trained in Ireland by Paddy Mullins last season. Now with Paul Nicholls, he has doubled his record.

Mouse Bird (2.00) returned in great heart at Newton Abbot when beating Morstock seven lengths. That distance could have been doubled had Dunwoody not been penalised in the Plum Center Handicap Hurdle.

Jonjo O'Neill, the Fenitth trainer, landed an across-the-card double yesterday with Ivy House at Sedgfield and Lord Of The West at Ludlow.



Over and out... David Walsh parts company from his mount Circulation at Sedgfield yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

today's course last month when he beat Mythical Approach by two lengths and looks open for further improvement.

Ivy House, five times a winner over hurdles, gained a long overdue first victory over fences in the Dick Brewitt Memorial Handicap Chase at Sedgfield.

Mr Mullanig will bypass the Hennessy in favour of the Rehearsal Chase on December 7, where he will be ridden by leading conditional Richard Johnson.

Johnson was replaced aboard Marching Marquis, owned like Mr Mullanig by Michael Worcester, at Exeter last week, having been unseated from the same horse at Cheltenham on October 29.

Hellen's Novice Chase. High Handed was three lengths clear when unseating his rider three from home, leaving Cader Idris to come home unchallenged.

Mr Mullanig will bypass the Hennessy in favour of the Rehearsal Chase on December 7, where he will be ridden by leading conditional Richard Johnson.

Johnson was replaced aboard Marching Marquis, owned like Mr Mullanig by Michael Worcester, at Exeter last week, having been unseated from the same horse at Cheltenham on October 29.

But Worcester denied that the move constituted sacking Johnson, and yesterday Noel Chance, Mr Mullanig's trainer, confirmed: "It was a change in the way it has all been sorted out now."

One of racing's most successful partnerships is set to resume after confirmation that Michael Stoute, the Newmarket trainer, will receive five yearlings from the Aga Khan later this year.

Stoute and the Aga enjoyed a fruitful association before the owner withdrew his horses from Britain over the "Alyssa" affair of 1989.

Howard Gomes, aged 42, died in hospital from a gunshot wound to the chest received when he tried to calm his son, Keith Lewis, after Mike Tyson lost his world heavy weight boxing title to Evander Holyfield. Police in Colorado Springs said they arrested Lewis, age 21, in a motel.

BATH are planning a two-match tour of South Africa next summer. They hope to play Natal in Durban and Western Province in Cape Town, the scene of England's World Cup semi-final defeat by New Zealand last year.

The South West have named six players from Exeter, of Courage League Three, for the match against South Africa at Exeter next Wednesday. The selectors were unable to call on Bath or Bristol players because the English Professional Rugby Union Clubs have not yet agreed to release players from the top two divisions, but despite this there are three Gloucester men in the side.

STAN HUMPHRIES threw three touchdown passes, including one of 46 yards to Andre Coleman in the first half, as the San Diego Chargers beat the Detroit Lions 27-21 on Monday night. Humphries, who did not play in last week's victory over Indianapolis because of a dislocated shoulder, completed 21 of 33 passes for 311 yards and three touchdowns.

Newbury with guide to recent form

Table with 2 columns: Race number and details (e.g., 1.00 AMBROSE (two), 2.00 Redwoodgrove).

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RACELINE 0930 1684 NEWBURY WORCESTER KELSO

Worcester Jackpot card

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Results

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Soccer

Coca-Cola Cup, third-round replay
Lincoln City 1, Southampton 3

Saints hit back late and hard

David Hopps

LINCOLN produced a night of derring-do, as their manager John Beck had promised, but the Third Division side finally had to concede second-best to increasingly redoubtable opponents... Many Premiership sides might have floundered last night against Lincoln's direct style but Southampton, after equalising only 15 minutes from time through Jim Magilton's penalty, then confirmed their superiority with two further goals...

Coca-Cola Cup: Arsenal v Stoke City
Wright enters French spirit

IAN WRIGHT is learning French to help him stay on the same wavelength as Arsenal's inspirational midfielder Patrick Vieira... Wright, back in the England fold at 33 and with 13 goals already this season, said: "Patrick has been a brilliant addition to the team for me. He has set up some great chances with his passing, especially the goals I got against Middlesbrough and Blackburn recently..."

Evans decides to take no action over Collymore's 'petulance'

IAN ROSS
STAN COLLYMORE will not be disciplined by Liverpool for an alleged display of petulance during a reserves game last weekend... Collymore appeared to shout obscenities at journalists during the Pontins League fixture against Sheffield Wednesday at Anfield after scoring the first of two goals in his club's 4-0 victory...



Shouting the odds... they will be against Colin Addison's side at Leyton Orient on Saturday, but he expects his players to express themselves in London

Addison a Martyr to the cause

FA CUP PROFILE: David Foot on the Merthyr manager hoping to live up to his reputation as a creator of giantkilling surprises

THERE are managers who, when they have been fired a few times by unfeeling directors, become convinced with disaffection for the game that has been their living, and are never heard of again... Not so Colin Addison: he keeps coming back... Addison is a canny old hand at cup fighting and shock-creating. Orient did well not to take him and his part-timers from Mid-Glamorgan lightly...

In non-League football. They were attractive enough to pull in a 21,000 predominantly Celtic gate for the Cup visit of Reading...

for York City. He went on to play for Nottingham Forest, Arsenal — he was one of Bertie Mee's first signings along with George Graham — and Sheffield United... Addison is taking his squad, including the longest-serving player, the goalkeeper and Ford-shirt worker Gary Weger, for a short overnight stay in London before the first-round tie...

Emerson faces Boro grilling

John Wardle
MIDDLESBROUGH hope to play for the club against Everton tomorrow night... Emerson was originally expected back yesterday but Middlesbrough played down fears that he would not return, saying last night: "We expect Emerson tomorrow afternoon... Emerson is banned for the next three Premier League games and Middlesbrough had widespread problems in trying to bring him back for the Coca-Cola Cup derby with Newcastle on November 27..."

First Division: Barnsley 3, Norwich City 1

Moses strikes to start the parting of Norwich's defence

Paul Fitzpatrick
BARNESLEY, one of the most wholehearted sides in the division, made an impressive case for promotion at Oakwell last night... Moses strikes to start the parting of Norwich's defence... Norwich threatened to make Barnsley regret these misses and Adams twice went close, just failing to get full power as he moved on to a cross from the left and then bringing Watson to his first serious save of the half...

Cricket

COCA-COLA CUP Third-round replay
Lincoln City 1, Southampton 3... NATIONAL LEAGUE First Division... Second Division... SCOTTISH LEAGUE First Division... RUGBY UNION... TENNIS...

Rugby Union

INTERNATIONAL MATCH Ireland 28, Wales 20... TOURNAMENT MATCH Ireland 28, South Africa 25... RUGBY UNION... TENNIS...

Handwritten signature or text at the bottom of the page.

Rugby Union

International match: Ireland 25, Western Samoa 40

Samoans dash Irish boot

IRELAND succumbed reluctantly to a humiliating five-try defeat by an under-strength Western Samoa side that masterfully called the shots that mastered in the first floodlit rugby international here last night.

Robert Armstrong at Lansdowne Road. The Irish full-back Simon Mason finished with a personal tally of 30 points with the boot but even that storming try by the Irish prop Paul Wallace failed to blunt the Sa-

moans' admirable spirit of enterprise in only their second international appearance in Dublin. Towards the end the Islanders, among whom Tuigamala was outstanding, were still pressing frantically for further scores. It was difficult to tell whether the Irish players, who were already on a £30,000 basic and £3,000 match fee each, were inhibited by the added prospect of a £1,000 win bonus. Certainly the Samoans made their aggressive intentions abundantly clear before the kick-off when their big lock Leavaasa made heavy contact with Richard Wallace's face during the Islanders' version of the haka.

From the outset the Irish defence was in complete disarray, with a number of players ball-watching in the middle field and neglecting to cover the flanks. Thus invited, the Samoans made a flying start with a long-range try due to a couple of superb mis-passes by the scrum-half Filemu and the full-back Patu. The diminutive wing So'oalo took possession gleefully and sprinted 60 metres to score without an Irishman in sight.

Encouraged by the frequent gaps in the Irish midfield, the Samoans scored a second splendidly worked try in the 15th minute, the industrious Tuigamala releasing the centre Leavaasa on a straight run through to the posts which left Va'a with a simple conversion. Between times the full-back Mason kept Ireland notori- ally in touch with a couple of long-range penalty goals that punished the Samoans' persistent infringing in ruck and tackle. But Mason failed to pot two other penalties whereas the precise Va'a landed a 30-metre effort to make it 15-6.



Filemu ... flying start

Irland's recovery hopes were swiftly dashed when Va'a kicked another penalty for outside whereas Mason failed with a comparable effort. Eventually Mason did rediscover his line and range, potting a couple from outside the box, but Patu sealed Ireland's fate with a nicely judged grubber kick which he touched down just before the ball ran down Wallace's try was little and far too late and in any case Vaega then scored his side's fifth try. The Harlequins pair Lau-

Rugby League

Wigan chief denies selling Central Park

WIGAN yesterday denied selling their Central Park stadium to Dave Whelan, the owner of Wigan Athletic soccer club, for £4 million. No such decision had been taken, said their chairman Jack Robinson, and nor would it be until all other options had been investigated.

Whelan, a former honorary president of the rugby league club and once their major sponsor, made his offer last week, with the promise of a further £7 million to develop Central Park into a modern stadium to be shared by the league and soccer clubs.

Cricket

Adams succeeds where Lara fails

JIMMY ADAMS, who made 57, and the wicket-keeper Courtney Browne (50) prompted West Indies to a 48-run victory over a Northern Territory Invitation XI in Alice Springs yesterday. They put on 58 for the sixth wicket as West Indies made 238 for eight from their 50 overs before dismissing the hosts for 170 in 42.5 overs.

who clipped in with 66 from 125 deliveries, made light work of Sri Lanka's total of 189. The pair put on 171 for the first wicket in 39.1 overs to leave the world champions in danger of missing Friday's final. Anwar's knock — his 11th one-day century — followed his 104 against New Zealand on Sunday.

Ice Hockey

Struggling Storm go Dutch to strengthen their defence

MANCHESTER Storm, languishing in the lower half of the Superleague, have strengthened their squad by signing the Dutch-Canadian defenceman Bart Vanstaalduinen, who began the season with Lillehammer in the Norwegian league.

Year for his performances last season, Lawless hopes he will play at Nottingham on Saturday.

Team talk

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0891 33 77+			
Arsenal	06	Ipswich Town	19
Aston Villa	11	Leeds United	03
Barnsley	34	Leicester City	36
Blackburn	21	Liverpool	04
Bolton	36	Man. City	02
Bristol City	21	Man. United	01
Burnley	34	Middlesbrough	23
Cardiff	08	Milwall	29
Coventry City	17	Newcastle Utd	16
Derby County	25	Newcastle Utd	18
Everton	05	Nottm. Forest	13
Hudd. Town	32	QPR	25
Sheffield United	15		
Sheffield Wed.	14		
Southampton	20		
Stoke City	30		
Sunderland	27		
Tottenham Hot.	07		
West Ham	12		
Wimbledon	26		
Wolves	37		
Yeovil	09		
Rangers	10		

First lady of the marketing maul

Maria Pedro is one of a new breed of PR adviser who make household names of sportsmen like Jeremy Guscott. Jill Turner reports



Femme fatale ... Pedro is unfazed that Guscott, left, was recently dropped by England. 'He's not on the way out'

MARIA PEDRO is a business-woman who wants a slice of the biggest cake going. In the yuppie-driven Eighties she made her money in the city but by the end of the decade she had transferred her attention to the Next Big Thing, setting up a multi-media company with the rock star Peter Gabriel.

44-year-old divorcee as simply a woman who fancies surrounding herself with good-looking men would be doing her a severe disservice. Her red-thin figure and exotic South American/Nigerian European looks belie a ruthless nature and she doesn't indulge her clients, however handsome they are.

"No, no," she says, waving a manicured hand. "I can't do anything for them if they don't perform well on the field. Some people rushed off into promoting themselves as celebrities and forgot the playing side." She pauses momentarily. "It's not about winning but about taking part was talking nonsense."

Marketing is a sportswoman's best friend. "Marketing is the same as marketing any of my clients, from Raymond Blanc to Peter Gabriel. You have to find a USP and exploit it. But some people don't have one, they are as bland as supermarket own brands and I can do nothing with them."

"There are a few characters I'm looking at over the next few years. The one I'm after now is Olivier Roumat. Whoever got him to play in England could name their price. Joseph Krumpholtz is another."

"They are still blinkered as to their obligations. Millions of pounds are being put into the sport and people don't do that for fun. Sir John Hall, Ashley Levett and Frank Warren are not collecting rugby players like a philatelist collects stamps. They want a return on profit. The public too will have demands. They see these guys getting paid for what they do and their expectations will be raised. Players' private lives will come under scrutiny like never before."

England beware Dominguez as Irish welcome back Wood

ITALY'S captain, the Milan prop Massimo Cuttitta, has passed a fitness test on his injured thigh and leads the 21-man squad named yesterday for Saturday week's Twickenham international.

Ireland A beat their South Africa counterparts 26-25 yesterday as the sides shared six tries in a physical match at Lansdowne Road. The Irish wing Conor O'Shea.

Fresh money offer in clubs dispute

TWICKENHAM has made a "preliminary offer" to the clubs in Leagues One and Two in an attempt to end its year-long dispute with the senior clubs. The Rugby Football Union has suggested a payout of £10 million in 1996, on top of the £2 million it has offered this year and the £10 million for 1997.

The clubs have been given tomorrow as a deadline to offer their "approval in principle", and Nottingham of League Two have already done so. The clubs' representative body, English Professional Rugby Union Clubs, is meeting in Northampton today and RFU officials will be waiting to explain details of their proposals.

Meanwhile, Five Nations organisers yesterday promised to avoid a repeat of the fixture chaos that has blighted the game's first full professional season.

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SportsGuardian

BETTING

This man thought he had won £259,200. The bookies said no. Yesterday it was left to a paper to arbitrate. The Sporting Life sided with Coral

Luke Harding on the bet of a lifetime that may soon see Coral in court

IN A dinky lit casino in Cardiff, Terry O'Callaghan waited to see the result of his home-town team Barry's Uefa Cup match in Aberdeen. That afternoon he had placed £50 in accumulator bets with Coral on the result of four football games. With Barry's 3-1 defeat, he got them all right. Still reeling from his good fortune, he celebrated with champagne as the casino manager totted up his winnings on a calculator. They came to £259,200. It was or so he thought, the "bet of a lifetime". But yesterday an independent panel ruled in favour of the High Street betting chain, which had refused to pay out. The manager of the shop in Hayes, Cardiff, where the bet was placed on September 10, had failed to photograph the betting slip when it was handed over the counter, normally a routine procedure in betting shops across Britain. Coral consequently decided the wager was null and void and curtly informed the 52-year-old O'Callaghan by letter he was not going to be paid. O'Callaghan, a watercolour artist, appealed to the time-honoured Green Seal Service run by the Sporting Life newspaper, and even enlisted the support of 31 MPs who put down an early-day motion urging Coral to pay up. But yesterday the quasi-judicial Green Seal panel, which traditionally arbitrates in disputes between disgruntled punters and the betting powers-that-be, ruled in favour of Coral.



Today a worthless slip of paper... Cardiff punter Terry O'Callaghan displays the £259,200 correct-score betting coupon that Coral has declared void

advice. He is expected to sue Coral and pursue his claim through the courts. The betting-shop manager at the centre of the affair, Ron Chivers, is off work with stress. Coral's spokesman Malcolm Palmer said last night: "We are obviously encouraged that the Sporting Life has recognised we were right to declare this bet void." The punter had placed two £256 correct-score accumulator bets. In one bet he forecast that Aberdeen would beat Barry 3-1 and Newcastle beat Halmstad 4-0, both Uefa Cup matches, with Colchester defeating Brighton 2-0 and Scarborough edging Doncaster 2-1. They all did. It is general practice among bookmakers to treat bets which have not been photographed as void unless there are good reasons for regarding them as bona fide. Bookmakers regard the camera film as an essential element in their security system as it guarantees a betting slip has not been completed after an event has taken place. Labour's Tony Banks, who signed the early-day motion, said: "Coral are bad losers and I think people who place bets should remember this."

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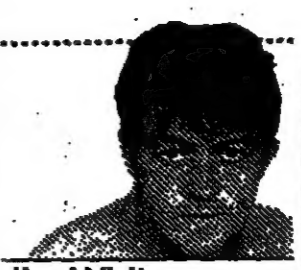
Strange facts of sporting life

Graham Rock explains why a newspaper panel is the punter's last court of appeal

PUNTERS and bookmakers in dispute over bets not involving horse racing have no alternative but to rely on arbitration because, for a century and a half, gambling debts have not been recoverable under British law. The Gaming Act of 1842 made all contracts by way of wagering null and void. Before then wagers of £10 or more were enforceable. At that time — and indeed until 1994 — the Jockey Club ran racing. Behind the scenes, friends of the club lobbied Westminster, and the 1842 Act was passed retrospectively to head off a total of 68 legal actions which could have cost club members a potential £500,000. In the following year a Charles Russell was

Hart, formerly secretary to a Sporting Life editor, the late Ossie Fletcher. The only betting enforceable by law is spread betting. This accounts for only a small percentage of gambling turnover, and the companies involved are strictly regulated by the Securities and Futures Authority. Companies that offer spread betting can sue defaulters, and the operators themselves can be pursued through the courts for outstanding debts. Prospective clients must provide detailed proof of their ability to meet an agreed credit limit, while the spread-betting bookmakers are required to lodge a significant proportion of their potential losses with a central body. Horse racing disputes are settled by Tattersalls' Committee, which is funded by the British Horseracing Board but reports to the Jockey Club. The members

Players with the right stuff for power



Jim White

PRIME Minister Imran: it has a ring to it. Almost as much as First Lady Jemima. After four years of pretending he wasn't interested, he was just keen to do his bit for charity, build his hospital and joust with oaks in the High Court, last week Imran Khan finally, publicly, admitted he wants to be leader of Pakistan. In a flurry of cricketing metaphors, he has pitched himself into the sticky wicket of electioneering, running in with an anti-corruption action, which, Shane Warne and his mates in the Australian cricket squad would be quick to point out, for the average Pakistani captain at first glance is not unlike Gazza campaigning on the battered wives ticket. But this is the point. Imran is renowned in his homeland for succeeding at the one task reckoned there to be impossible. In 1982 he turned a bunch of in-fighting, self-absorbed prima donnas who comprised the Pakistan cricket team, some of whom were suspected by many of their supporters not to be making a sufficient effort in certain matches because it might interfere with their personal betting portfolios, into a side that won the cricket World Cup. He took on the sparring factions and made them not just work together but beat the rest of the world, a piece of shrewd diplomacy Boutros Boutros Ghali would kill to achieve. If he could do that with Javed and the lads, Imran wants the voters to believe, leading the country would be as easy as bowling to John Major in a charity game. As an idea, Imran's is not as preposterous as it sounds. Why should a man who has triumphed so conspicuously in international sport be any less qualified for the highest office than someone who has succeeded in business, say, the law, or in Pakistan's case, the army? Why might he not transfer his skills? As a cricket captain Imran was dynamic, imaginative and above all clean: all the prerequisites his country searches for in a leader after the Benazir years. Indeed Imran is not the only aspirant politician reminding the voters of his past as a

sporting hero these past few weeks. In the US elections Jack Kemp, Senator Dole's running mate, playing a long game for the year 2000, spent the latter stages of the campaign distancing himself from his senior partner and planting the idea that having once been a quarterback in the public eye, he was a means of raising a country's self-esteem, being good at games is more significant than being a canny negotiator in the public spending round. Which makes you think: if sports hero as candidate is that good a political marketing concept, who in this country might be groomed for the transition from playing field to Parliament? We have some limited precedent here: Christopher Chataway and Seb Coe both ran themselves into Westminster. And, though it is debatable whether having once sat at the back of a boat while eight blokes sweated themselves into an early grave strictly qualifies him as a sportsman, Colin Moynihan even steered himself towards a ministerial portfolio. These, however, were not men touched with sufficient affection in the public heart to make high office.

BUT what an election-winning Cabinet could be constructed from former British sporting heroes: Lester Piggott at the Treasury, half the Arsenal squad at the Ministry of Health presiding the benefits of abstinence, Jack Charlton at Agriculture leading our negotiating team at the Common Fisheries summit, Nigel Benn, a battered national monument in urgent need of patching up, would be at home at the Heritage department, Willie Jones could cut out law and order at the Home Office, and, particularly if Imran gets voted in, it would give up Commonwealth Conferences no end to appoint Ian Botham Foreign Secretary. Prime Minister would be a trickier position to fill, however. The Imran model would presuppose a world champion, which, in Britain's case, narrows the choice down to a couple of small bores and a coxless pair. But if we widen the net to those connected with sport who quickened the national pulse, lifted the collective chin and put a patriotic spring in the step even if, ultimately, it ended in tears, then the field is clear. Step forward, in the first dual leadership of the country since William and Mary, David Baddiel and Frank Skinner.

Home win marks new Henman work ethic

Stephen Barley in Telford
THE Tim Henman roadshow, otherwise known as the Guardian Direct Nationals, opened in Telford yesterday with Britain's No. 1, after three successive first-round international defeats, rediscovering the road to success on the home front. "Very nice to win again," he observed without too much excitement. Henman, having reached the quarter-finals at Wimbledon and risen to a high of No. 25 in the world rankings recently, had lost to Stefan Edberg of Sweden, Spain's Carlos Moya and Zimbabwe's Byron Black in quick succession at ATP tournaments over the past month.

Berkshire's Greg Saffery, a qualifier, mustered as much resistance as possible, managed one break of serve in the second set when Henman was leading 3-0, and was finally beaten 6-1, 6-2 in 50 unremarkable minutes. With both Henman and Greg Rusedski, who will begin his challenge today, in the world's top 50 the Nationals almost strutted on to its Shropshire stage this year. The Industrial Revolution had its roots in nearby Ironbridge and the success of Henman, in particular has set in motion a feeling of imminent progress and change within the British game. Jeremy Bates, who for a decade carried the cross of domestic expectations, will assume responsibility for men's

national training next year and yesterday signalled his hope of taking the country's best young players to a training camp in Florida where they would get the chance to play against Henman and Rusedski. "When I was young I played a lot against Jeremy and you learn there is no magical secret to success, you just have to work hard," said Henman, who admitted that his recent defeats were probably the result of insufficient fitness and stamina. He has reached six semi-finals this year and knows he has to train harder and more consistently. His coach, David Felgate, who has relinquished certain LTA involvements to be with Henman at the major tournaments, will make sure

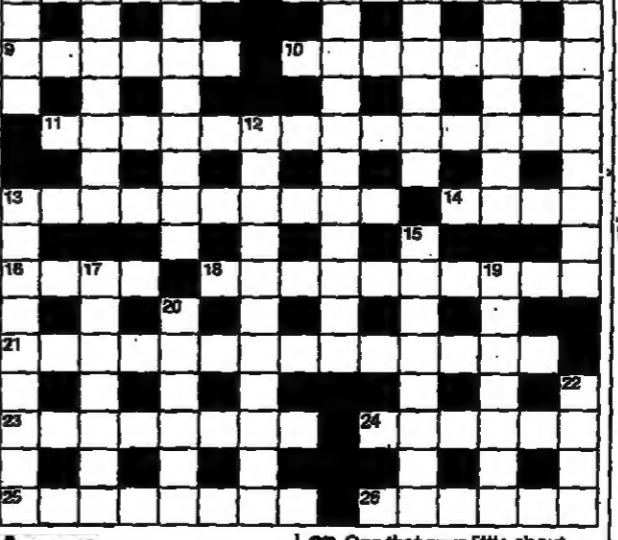
a daily routine is pursued with vigour. The British No. 1 also intends playing more doubles next year and is currently negotiating to partner Holland's Jan Siemerink. The optimism that has risen within the men's game is considerably less apparent on the women's side of the net. Britain has no one in the world top 100 and yesterday the No. 1 seed, Sara Smith, struggled to beat the Kent teenager Abigail Tudor 2-6, 7-5, 6-3. Worse befell the No. 2 seed and former British No. 1 Rachel Viollot, the daughter of Manchester United's Fifities star Dennis Viollet, who lives and trains in the United States, went out 6-4, 6-4 against Surrey's Lorna Woodroffe.



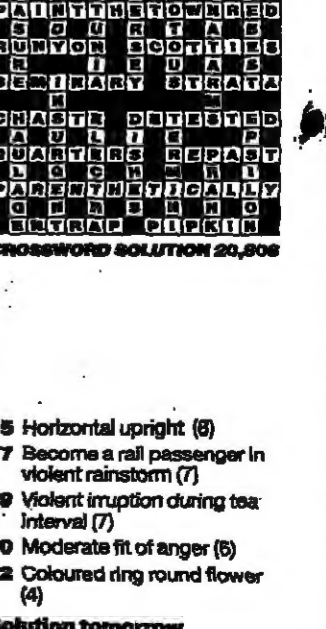
Henman... more training

Guardian Crossword No 20,809

Set by Janus



- 1 Two men to beware? (6)
4 Goes with husbands or wives (8)
9,8 Hardy oyster back on the menu? (6,2,3,5)
10 Point time-server put on garden implement (9)
11 Plead guilty, as Harrods doorman may do on sales day? (5,3,6)
13 Unreasonable share in rail deployment (10)
14 Make a new part for an actor (4)
16 Uniform for night before first night (4)
18 Road with sinister associations for governments (10)
21 Packed or unpacked, whichever is applicable (2,3,4,3,2)
23 One that says little about very quiet artist? (8)
24 Determined old soldier should be taken in (8)
25 Study forepart of beard (6)
26 Writer who liked to maintain high temperature? (6)
27 Kind of cakes or tarts (4)
28 Does he turn to drama in the ring? (7)
29 Answer to blockades if trials turn out (8)
30 See 8 Across
31 Trifling show of neglect (6)
32 Compunction concerning detective (7)
33 Striped cloth-workers (6)
34 It could inflict a severe burning on a culprit's form (8,3)
35 A client is somewhat inflexible (6)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,809

15 Horizontal upright (8)
17 Becomes a rail passenger in violent rainstorm (7)
19 Violent irruption during tea interval (7)
20 Moderate fit of anger (6)
22 Coloured ring round flower (4)
Solution tomorrow
27 Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0800 338 226. Calls cost 50p per minute Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm, and 45p per minute at all other times. Service supplied by AFS.

As an upstanding member of Pakistani society, your husband is bound to be supportive (although you did say that if the baby was more than two days late you would have to be induced to fit in with his busy schedule).
An open letter to Jemima Goldsmith

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سكنا من الامل